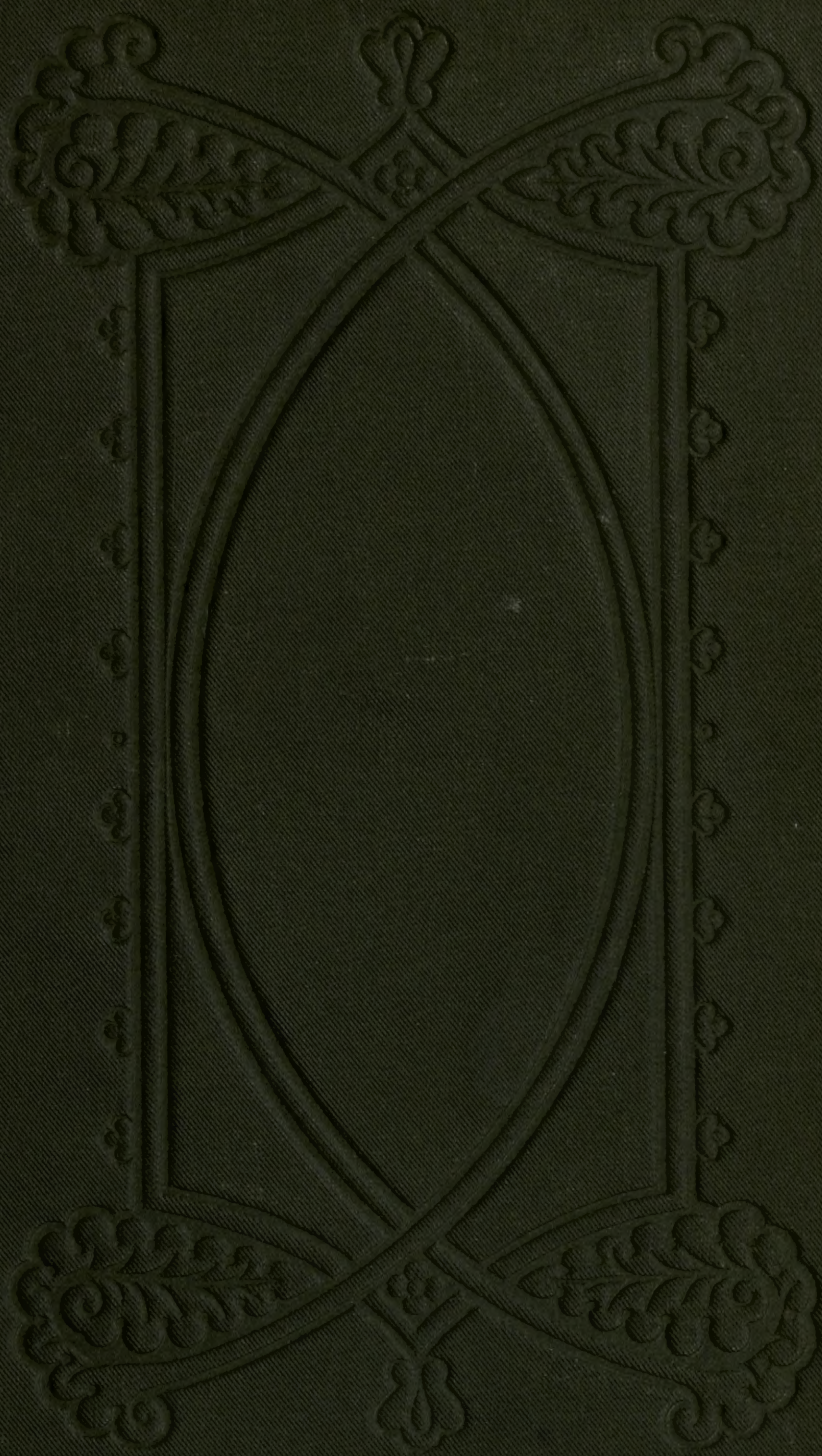




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A  
SHORT PROTESTANT COMMENTARY  
ON THE BOOKS OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT.  
VOL. I.







*Bibl. Lit.  
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A

# SHORT PROTESTANT COMMENTARY

ON THE BOOKS OF THE

## NEW TESTAMENT:

WITH GENERAL AND SPECIAL INTRODUCTIONS.

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EDITED BY

PROF. PAUL WILHELM SCHMIDT

AND

PROF. FRANZ VON HOLZENDORFF.

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Translated from the Third Edition of the German

BY

FRANCIS HENRY JONES, B.A.

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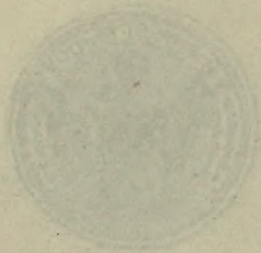
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## NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

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THE Commentary, of which a translation is here given to English readers, is a Commentary on Luther's version of the New Testament, such corrections as the commentators thought necessary being made in the notes. It may be presumed that the very same arguments which led the editors to take Luther's version as their basis,\* would have led them in England to take the "Authorized Version." Accordingly, the words of the New Testament as given in italics in the notes and then commented upon, are taken throughout from the Authorized Version. The rendering there given in inverted commas is that of the German commentator, and where introduced by the words "should be" is given by him as a necessary correction, some error occurring in Luther's version as in our own. Where the quotation is simply followed by a correction in inverted commas without remark, the correction is the reading found in Luther's version, and accepted by the commentator without remark. With the exception of the correction of errors which are found in Luther's version only, and not in our own, I have reproduced even those notes which may appear unnecessary in consequence of the passages to which they refer being already more lucid in the English version than in the German, or trifling in consequence of the English version being already much nearer

\* See p. xx. It has not been thought necessary to repeat what is said on this point in the General Introduction. It can have no interest except for German readers. The remarks here referred to may for the most part be applied to the Authorized Version and the various English Versions from private hands.



to the original than the German. I have thought it better to retain a few sentences that are unnecessary to the English reader, than to risk the omission of anything that he might find useful. It will perhaps be an advantage rather than a disadvantage to English readers that the authors of this Commentary, in some parts at least, have passed somewhat lightly over questions of textual criticism or translation. A German writer could scarcely deal with these questions just as our version requires them to be dealt with. I have added a very few notes in square brackets [ ], which seemed to me to be required on this account; but must recommend those who are interested in this branch of Scriptural investigation to use some critical edition of the Authorized Version—for example, the Variorum New Testament of Rev. R. L. Clarke and Alfred Goodwin.

F. H. J.



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## PREFACE.

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To the people of Germany the Bible is not what the Reformers intended that it should be. The relation of the present generation to it oscillates between an idolatrous worship of the letter on the one hand, and contemptuous rejection on the other hand.

In the days of Luther, our ancestors read the Bible with a view to justification of the Protestant position and edification in it, with a view, that is, to a *Protest* against mediæval tradition and sacerdotalism.

Now all this is changed. In the hands of a clergy at enmity with science, the Bible has been made false to its own nature; and, like the Popes in the middle ages, dogmas, canons and orthodox traditions, are to-day set over the Bible itself as infallible. This seems to us an un-Protestant course. The Bible is an unfailing source of Christian faith throughout the history of man; but is it therefore itself to be simply the *object* of our faith? Not only the contents and authenticity, but also the origin of its separate parts, and the purposes which the writers had in view, must be subject to the most comprehensive and searching scientific inquiry.

For a long time the majority of Protestant readers took the Bible, without consideration, as a *single* divine utterance, delivered as it were in one unbroken discourse. They did not know that the separate parts of the New Testament were produced by different men in very different circumstances, and having to some extent diverse ideas, gifts, knowledge and conceptions. They did not perceive that the writers of the various parts of the New Testament have described the earliest events of Chris-



tian history, not *in conjunction* with one another, but partly *side by side*, partly *in succession*, and very frequently *in opposition* to one another.

At the same time, it is only those who treat the New Testament unhistorically that can speak of its unreconciled contradictions, those who regard it as an external unit, instead of connected stages of an historical development of early Christian views. Can we speak of one century as a *contradiction* of the century which preceded it? Is the peculiar characteristic of one person a contradiction of the character of any other man? Have not the same sun and the same moon been sung by hundreds of poets in different languages and varied metres? The reflection, the echo, of the divine nature in the human soul is more varied than the voice of poetry before the brilliant lights of day and night. Such contradictions as we acknowledge do exist in the Bible are no more than ripples upon the surface of an ocean the depths of which are unmoved.

The honest theology which investigates without reserve, and does not trouble itself about the interests of ecclesiastical institutions and authorities, has long ago won an historical view of the Bible, which differs completely from the idea of those who still believe that all that is necessary for a proper understanding of the Bible is to be able to read. Reverence for the Bible flourishes, not in the mystic darkness of the supernatural, but in the light of history. Historical experience teaches us that the eye-witnesses of a fact are the best narrators, but are not the best judges of its nature. The historian is almost always a better judge than the contemporary of an event. And this is true even in regard to the apostles. Their immediate perception did not contain that fulness of knowledge which science has constructed by centuries of labour. But along with this ripener knowledge of the science of our day, scholars have hitherto felt no corresponding necessity of imparting it to the people, nor have they had the courage to subject popular Christianity to the test of a maturer consideration of the Bible.

Our *Protestant Commentary* is the result of a conviction that even educated persons, or those who regard themselves as such, are in pressing need of guidance along the way which leads to a proper understanding of the Bible, and that it is the duty of the science of to-day to bring the history of primitive Christian times within easier reach of the popular intellect. *Protestant Faith* has abolished the gulf between clergy and laity. *Protestant Science* must see that the immature ideas which sprang from the dreary orthodoxy of former centuries no longer run rank side by side with an esoteric Biblical learning confined to our universities and colleges.

A full acquaintance with the Biblical documents, and first of all with those of the New Testament, a confident approach of learned theology to the requirements of popular religious and moral education, to test the Bible by the standards of *historical* proof,—these appear to us to be vital matters affecting that German Protestantism before which the alternative is placed, at the present day, of either dying out or renewing its youth. Only as an ever-advancing development of Christian truth, only by perpetually breaking with all tests of human authority in matters of belief, and only by the most distinct rejection of that darkness of ecclesiastical infallibility which has its roots in the compulsion of creeds, can Protestantism maintain its position as a guiding power among the German people.

Science respects the doubt which, under the name of unbelief, is straightway condemned to perdition by zealots. For the faith which is afraid of scientific tests, or despises human reason in matters of religion, loses its moral value. The editors of this *Commentary* confess their faith that an end must be put to the contest between reason and faith, between religion and science, if the life of our people is to flourish.

In the preparation of this *Commentary* we have confined ourselves to the New Testament, reserving anything further for the future. Our plan is to take as our starting-point the honoured language of Luther's version, familiar in the churches and schools,



the homes and hearts, of the German people ; to correct it where necessary ; to elucidate it by explanatory notes and references ; and finally, by means of a short introduction to the New Testament as a whole, and separate introductions to its different parts, to show the historical position of the Biblical documents.

Formerly the letter of the Bible prevailed. To-day we seek its indwelling spirit. The great advances which have been made during the last three centuries in philology and history enable us to solve those doubts which former generations attempted simply to suppress by the despotic commands of creeds.

Our object is not to contribute anything new to Biblical science. We avoid as far as is practicable the region of doubtful surmises, and only seek to present those results to which definite shape has been given by the conscientious investigations of the soundest scholars.

Our work will not escape misunderstanding and disapproval. We know that we have to count upon the opposition of ancient prejudices and deep-rooted indifference, and even upon the opposition of many who rest in the certainty of pure faith. We do not boast of perfection, but at the same time it is not necessary for us to defend ourselves. We await the final sentence as to the value of our work from those who are engaged with us in striving after the emancipating power of truth which overcomes error, and after peace in those Christian communities which rest upon the universal priesthood.

FRANZ VON HOLZENDORFF.

CHARLOTTENBURG, SEPT. 25TH, 1872.

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

---

How should the Bible be read with this Commentary? As Goethe has remarked incidentally in his Aphorisms that it ought to be read: "I am convinced that the beauty of the Bible increases in proportion as it is understood; that is to say, in proportion as we consider and perceive that each word which we take *generally . . . . has had a peculiar, special and directly individual application in accordance with given circumstances of time and place.*"

Goethe, then, read the Bible. And he recommends those to do likewise who purpose to comprehend and to experience the beautiful as he understood it. But it is all in vain. Zealous readers of Goethe are seldom zealous readers of the Bible. Is there then "a great gulf fixed" between our culture and our Bible? Assuredly there is if the Bible is to be a *barrier* or a *statute-book* to human thought. But it is plain that what the poet meant was that, instead of this, it is an excellent *source* for the refreshment and enrichment of the spirit—a source from which we may derive an unperverted view of the most important creative religious epochs, and also valuable impulses to the life of our own deepest consciousness. It is plain that he meant that the heroic religious characters and the fundamental religious ideas of the Bible (*provided they be considered and understood purely historically*—as they really were, and not as the Church afterwards depicted or caricatured them) are well adapted to teach and edify the man of modern times, even though his intellectual idea of the world, and even to some extent his fundamental conception of life, may be separated by a wide gulf from



those of special Biblical pictures and ideas. It is only in the same way that we can explain another passage from Goethe's Aphorisms: "There is and will be much discussion as to the advantage or disadvantage of the popular dissemination of the Bible. To me it is clear that it will be mischievous, as it has always been, if used dogmatically or capriciously; beneficial, as it has always been, if accepted didactically (for our instruction) and with feeling." In other words, the Bible will be beneficial if it be read in the spirit of Protestantism.

With a clear conscience we delight to adhere in the third edition of this Commentary to the name of Protestant, on which so much abuse has been lavished, and the meaning of which, nevertheless, its opponents, especially, so well understand.

We read the Bible as Protestants. That is to say, first of all, not in the spirit of the Church of Rome. The Church of Rome (in the fourth session of the Council of Trent) declares to its adherents: "For the restraint of wanton minds the synod decrees that no man relying upon his own wisdom in matters of faith and morals, pertaining to the construction of Christian doctrine, perverting the sacred Scripture to his own sense, may venture to interpret it contrarily to that sense which has been held and is held by holy Mother Church, whose it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the sacred Scriptures," &c.—The spirit of the Reformation was quite different. Following the contemporary tendency of classical learning to go back in everything to the earliest sources, it broke down, with the power of a young religious life, the barriers which were intended to separate the inquiring Christian from the oldest and most genuine testimony of the Christian spirit. Those who were weary of the vain feasts of Rome, and were looking for wholesome nourishment to satisfy the pious longings of their hearts, were invited by it to the closest acquaintance with the treasures of the scriptural word that they might take therefrom the bread of life freely. "Were the holy Scripture a tree," said Luther exhorting them, "and all its words branches and twigs, I have shaken every branch and

spray that I might know what it contained and what it was capable of, and each time I have shaken down a little fruit." Assuredly the latest "catholic" movement against the sacrilegious pretensions of Rome could only have attained a higher significance than that of a semi-ecclesiastical, semi-political episode, by passing beyond the "old" catholicism of Trent, the middle ages and the fathers, to the oldest catholicism of the simple primitive religion of Jesus, which we find in the Bible, with its sparkling waters, and not to the "hewn cisterns" of any fixed doctrinal tradition, "broken cisterns that can hold no water." If the portrait of Luther at Worms, with the book in his right hand, does not speak plainly enough, the smoke that rose Anno Domini 1877 from the pile of Italian Bibles solemnly burnt before the cathedral of Spezzia in celebration of the Pope's jubilee, should show even the dimmest eyes what it is that Rome fears, and what weapon is shattering her dazzling shield.

We read the Bible as Protestants. That is to say, in the second place, not with the eyes of "evangelicalism." To a great extent the ordinary evangelical religious instruction, with its manuals and catechismal expositions, has rendered whole sections of the German people incapable of *reading* the Bible; i.e. of reading it without bias, and allowing to the different Biblical writers their own meaning. If they read in the fourth Gospel, "I and the Father are one," they think that the Bible, like the Church, teaches the equality of Jesus with God. If, together with Father and Son, the Holy Spirit be mentioned, they think they have before them sufficient scriptural ground for the ecclesiastical doctrine of the Trinity. If Jesus asks, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" they imagine that the Jesus "of the Bible" maintains that he possesses absolute moral perfection as the inheritance of his divine nature, while this same Jesus elsewhere emphatically disclaims this perfection and ascribes it to God alone. Again, when Jesus says his kingdom is not *of* this world, they forget that it is nevertheless *for* this world, that it is to *come*, that its members "inherit the earth;" and they suppose that the Bible demands exclusive devotion to the world beyond



the grave—as though the Christianity of the Bible were not the very religion which endeavours to make every religious power, every impulse arising from communion of the soul with God, directly productive of moral results. Or, again, if the Bible speaks of the general sinfulness of human nature, they credit it, consciously or unconsciously, with Augustine's doctrine of original sin as constituting the very *essence* of human nature. Even Anselm's mediæval doctrine of the insulted honour of God, and the necessary atonement by the satisfying sacrifice of the god-man, secretly floats before their minds wherever they read of justification by faith and reconciliation with God. Finally, when they have collected together all these doctrines, and some others in addition, they imagine they have before them the Christianity of the Bible, and many of them then declare that it is superseded—before they really know what it is.

“The Christianity of the Bible!” As if the Bible was *one* book, in which we might look for a uniform system of doctrine, complete in itself, concerning all things human and divine.

We read the Bible as Protestants. That is to say, in the third place, *not superstitiously*. The Bible has not come to Christendom as the complete gift of the revelation of God. The oldest name for it is “Biblia,” that is, “scriptures” or “writings,” the very name indicating a plurality of books, which have been gradually brought together to form our “holy Scripture,” a collection of the documents of two different religions. We must never forget this: not only that Abraham and Moses knew nothing of our Old Testament, that even David knew only its very first rudiments, and that the Old Testament itself was only completed with the fall of the nation of Israel; but also that for the whole of the first century of the *Christian* era there were only a few separate writings of the New Testament which were known, and these as private documents, and that it was not till the third, fourth and fifth centuries that our “New Testament” was finally closed as an established collection of the sacred writings of Christendom, or at any rate received general recognition as such in the Church.—But just as the *collection* of the “Biblia”

has its origin, not in any supernatural arrangements, but in a natural historical development, so also have the separate writings both of the Old Testament and of the New, with which latter alone we are at present concerned. As to the manner in which a "Gospel" arose, the author of the Gospel according to Luke, for instance, gives us the clearest information when he says: "After many have taken in hand to write down a narrative of those things which have happened among us—even as those who from the first were eye-witnesses or ministers of the word delivered them unto us—I also have thought well, having ascertained it all from the beginning, to write it all for thee, Theophilus, with care and in order, that thou mightest have a sure ground for the doctrine in which thou hast been instructed" (Luke i. 1—4). Thus simple and natural was the course of the New Testament historical writing. And if in the fourth Gospel *not* historical but didactic considerations determine the representation given of the person and life of Jesus, the peculiar personal bias of the writer is most candidly and simply acknowledged at the close of the book. How the "Epistles" and the "Revelation" have been determined down to their very sentences and particular words by definite personal interests, or the interests of specific communities, by special purposes of dispute or reconciliation, of correction and chastisement or comfort and encouragement, while the occasions which gave rise to them have always been purely historical, purely human,—all this is shown both generally and in detail in the historical introductions contained in these volumes. That the divine spirit inspired heart and soul of the New Testament writers, who can deny, that has perceived the slightest breath of the spirit of primitive Christianity, or has himself understood that all of us are what we are by the grace of God? But that the Bible is therefore "God's word," as though God had himself dictated the Bible and only left to the sacred writers to commit the eternal truth to writing, is an idea unworthy alike of the divine and of the human spirit. The first beginnings of such an idea in the era of the Reformation may be explained by the inner struggles which convulsed Christendom



at that time, and may be pardoned ; but its supposed justification finds not the slightest support in the Bible itself (comp. pp. 26 sq.).

As soon as Biblical research had entirely freed itself from such views as these, the uniformity of a supposed supernatural literature which had formerly met its gaze was suddenly transformed into varied and living pictures of primitive Christian characters and ideas, disputes and reconciliations. It had become a fruitful historical science ; a science, in the strictest sense, like that of the interpretation and history of ancient classical literature, following the same laws of linguistic and historical investigation, only its subject gave to it a higher consecration and a more universal human importance.

One thing more in conclusion. We read the Bible as Protestants ; that is to say, under the guidance of modern science, and for that very reason *not modernizing it*. The sway of so-called rationalism is not yet extinct, nor with it the race of those readers of the Bible who, in order to escape the conflict between the Bible and their own religious convictions, violently transform the original ideas of the Biblical writers into the ideas of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These violators of the word of the Bible still stood to some extent under the curse of a superstitious devotion to the Bible, and for that reason endeavoured to shelter *their own* conception of nature and miracle, of human reason and the divine spirit, under the authority of scriptural proof. But what should we say to the expositor of the Homeric poems who should undertake to “explain” the poetic expressions of the naive old Grecian views of the universe and life in accordance with the prevailing ideas of the present day ? . . . . The men of the New Testament, no less, pictured to themselves a different earth, a different heaven, from ours. The Protestant reader leaves these to them, while he looks at their spiritual life reverently and *independently*. It is enough, if the same impulse urges us to the same almighty, all-wise, all-loving Spirit to which their heart and intellect made its offering ; then we have, after all, the same religion as they. The Christians of the New Testament regarded the peculiar sanctifying and beatific nature of

Jesus with other eyes than we. It is enough, if we tread with the same zeal the paths of the highest religion which he disclosed; then we have, after all, the same Christianity as they. The *highest* religion, we say; for higher than the doctrine of the religious *unity* of man with God no other religion can aspire, and this is the peculiar doctrine of Christianity.

Thus, then, we read the Bible as Protestants. One or two further remarks we must make as to details.

(1) For the furtherance of a correct historical consideration of the New Testament, it would of course be a decided advantage if the collection of New Testament writings actually began with the biography of one who is undoubtedly the earliest Christian writer, viz. the Apostle Paul, and his separate Epistles were then arranged in their proper places in chronological order. Then the later books should follow, including the Gospels, as we have set forth in our Introduction (pp. 9—20). The editors of this Commentary, however, did not consider that the time had yet come for an arrangement at present so strange to readers of the Bible. For the present, therefore, we adhere to the traditional arrangement according to the *contents* of the separate books, viz. history, doctrine and prophecy.

(2) We have not based our Commentary on the text known as the "Revised Text" of the Bible depository of Halle. Though otherwise well intended and industriously executed, too great a reverence for the old version has prevented it from attaining to a thorough correction of all that is actually erroneous or unintelligible. The available translations undertaken by private individuals, that of Prof. V. Weizsäcker included, are more valuable for their learning and accuracy than their power. The new translation that we require will scarcely be produced by any single scholar, but will rather be one of the fruits of that evangelical German Church, united and flourishing in peace, for which at present we can only work and hope.

(3) Careful attention to the corrections we have made is essential to a proper understanding of the Commentary.



(4) We would also call special attention to the references in our notes to parallel passages in other parts of the Bible. These references will often render further commentary superfluous.

Of course there are many requirements which our Commentary will not satisfy. If the text of the New Testament, the explanation of which as a whole is much more difficult than is usually supposed, is not to be lost in a sea of notes, we must be satisfied to explain what is distinctly unintelligible or difficult, and for the rest be content to set the reader on the right track. If our Commentary should be called upon to answer every justifiable question, it would have to reply, "The world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John xxi. 25).

(5) In those portions of the Commentary contributed by the late Prof. Bruch and Pastor Lang, the editors have thought right to make no alterations in this edition. In the commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians, on the other hand, the alterations have been very numerous, in consequence of the recent active discussions and the still unsettled questions concerning it.

(6) In its third edition, this Commentary continues to appeal to such readers as have attained a certain amount of education. Another edition is in preparation, the work of one hand, and intended to bring our work within reach of all. The one will not supersede the other, but they will supplement each other. The editors trust that, in one form or the other, their Commentary may justify to many in town and village, to teachers, to inquirers and to believers, the saying of Luther: "I know not how strong others may be in the faith. But for myself, were I ever so learned and spiritual, I cannot attain such holiness as some think they possess. With me it is always the same; if I am without the Word, if I do not think upon it and go about with it, there is no Christ within, no aspiration, no spirit; but so soon as I take to myself a psalm or a verse of Scripture, there is light and warmth in my heart, so that I have a new heart and a new spirit. Thus, of all gifts, the gift of the divine Word is the most glorious. He who takes it away, takes the sun out of the universe."

## INTRODUCTION.

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### I.—THE ORIGIN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS.

THE period during which the writings of the New Testament were composed, embraces about a hundred years (from 50—60 A.D. to about the middle of the second century). It is doubtful whether we are to regard the Epistle to the Galatians (55-6 A.D.) or the First Epistle to the Thessalonians as the oldest book of the New Testament. The latter, if written by St. Paul, would date from the year 54. In any case, between the time when Jesus “ascended to the Father,” and the composition of the earliest Pauline Epistles, lies a troubled interval of at least twenty years, full of important events. For the first Christians had little or no desire to commit the gospel to writing, and it seems at first scarcely to have occurred to them to hand down to posterity a written account of Christian History and Doctrine. As Luther says in his Commentary on the sections of Scripture appointed to be read in the Church (Kirchenpostille), “The Apostles and Evangelists call only the Old Testament the Holy Scripture. For not Scripture, but incarnate living words, were to be the New Testament; wherefore Christ himself wrote nothing, but commanded to preach his gospel by word of mouth.”

“I am come to cast fire upon the earth, and what would I rather than that it were already kindled?” (Luke xii. 49). Thus had Jesus himself expressed the object of his preaching concerning the kingdom of God and of his life as the Son of Man. And



when the hour had passed, at the thought of which he had been "so troubled until it had passed" (Luke xii. 50), the hour of "the baptism with which he must first be baptized," the hour of the passover of his death, then his last commands, which the disciples heard as they stood thrilled by the sight of his glory, referred neither to the provision of a written record of the new revelation of God in him, nor to new tables of the law like those of stone on which with "His own finger" God engraved His old revelation (Exod. xxxi. 18). The commands which the disciples then received from the Master who had died, and for them had arisen again from the dead, were these: first, in a community at Jerusalem (Luke xxiv. 49; Acts i. 14) to cherish faithfully the flame which had made the "heart burn within" others than the disciples of Emmaus; and then when they had received "power from above," by the fuel of each one's speech (Matt. xxviii. 20), to spread this flame throughout "all nations."

But they were to go, not as messengers of peace, but as bearers of the sword (Luke xii. 51 sqq.; Matt. x. 34—36). Spiritual tumult, rebellion against the traditional social arrangements of human nature, such was the "fire" which Jesus himself had promised in mysterious words: "The son against his father, the daughter against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, a man's foes they of his own household." In a word, Jesus had demanded the breaking off of all the natural ties of love (Matt. xii. 46—50; Mark iii. 31—35; Luke viii. 19—21), the willing and even enthusiastic renunciation of the life of the natural inclinations and passions, and in its place a new life in the supreme and passionate love of God, and the perfect love of man which flows from it. And thus he had given to his disciples the fundamental commandment of the kingdom of God, upon which hung all the law and the prophets (Matt. xxii. 40). The sceptre of that kingdom he himself won by his Messianic life and received at his death.

This Messianic teaching was very imperfectly understood, even by those who gathered affectionately around Jesus himself. Nay,

even the Master only came gradually to the full recognition of the religious consequences which lay concealed in the divine kernel of his preaching of the kingdom of God. Only by serious reflection and rich experience, in the course of the instructive occurrences of his wanderings in Palestine (comp. Matt. xv. 24 sqq.), and "by still and holy nights of thought and prayer," did he work his way from the first suspicion of his Jewish Messiahship, to the full consciousness of the fact that he was a spiritual King of humanity. And the disciples were not above their Master. They followed him laboriously afar off, and more than once he reproached them in his impatient anxiety for the kingdom of God. His sayings with regard to the suffering and death that awaited him had sufficed to obscure for a time their expectations of the regal glory of a Messianic kingdom, which was to be established through him in conjunction with themselves. But these sayings had not been sufficient to transfigure and spiritualize their conception of that kingdom. The capture of Jesus was the sign for their flight (Matt. xxvi. 56); the bravest of them "wept bitterly" over his own cowardice; and when the horrible deed was over in Jerusalem, the fugitives did not venture to meet together again until they reached Galilee (Matt. xxviii. 16).

They had only one thing left amid the storm: their *personal* affection for the mysterious being from Nazareth. And when their minds, stirred within them and glowing in the rapture of fresh memory or of sad meditation, saw him, who was dead, standing again before them, each time one thing became more certain: *crucified, he was yet the Messiah*. "*Was it not necessary that Jesus should suffer such things and enter into his glory?*" (Luke xxiv. 26, 46). As they remembered words of prophecy to which they had hitherto not paid sufficient attention, the scales fell, as it were, from their eyes, and their confidence in him was confirmed again. Their faint-heartedness seemed to them folly and sloth (Luke xxiv. 25), culpable disbelief in all that the prophets had written of the Messiah. Isaiah (liii. 2 sqq.) chastened them, and Daniel (vii. 13) raised them up again. The broken



intercourse of their hearts with the Master was restored with new strength and depth of feeling. When they "gather together with one accord" in the temple, they gather together for prayer with him who had promised to build again the temple which was destroyed. They "break bread" in communion with him who a little while before broke bread for them and was betrayed.

This purely personal character of the earliest Christianity gave a powerful impulse to it, but it exerted at the same time a powerful check upon the free action of the primitive Christian spirit.

It gave an *impulse*, for it was this transcendent personal spiritual intercourse between the disciples who were left behind and the Master who was thus exalted, which gave zeal and *warmth* to the religious life of the first Christian community. And it was this warmth of spirit which protected and cherished Christianity, until in the person of Paul a higher *understanding* of Jesus' teaching of the kingdom of God made its appearance, and handed down the true account of it to future generations. Often in the later history of religious feeling the enthusiastic nature of the first Christian community stormily burst forth again. These were the sacred hours when Christianity renewed its youth at the fountains of its life. But pre-eminent above all else in its persistence stands the primitive Christian enthusiasm called into being by Jesus' promise of his *return* to establish his kingdom, and kept alive by the vivid and overpowering impression of his first appearance, which had not yet been blanchèd and weakened by pedantic reflections and speculations. The recency of the earthly life of Jesus, and the universal expectation that he would come again *soon*, combined to inspire the primitive community with this violent enthusiasm. And yet, on the other hand, the delay in the immediate fulfilment of these expectations seemed to afford no reason for allowing the fire of expectation itself to cool. The sayings of Jesus concerning his re-appearance, which were still remembered, were always capable of extension in regard to time: "Verily, I say unto you, *this generation* shall

not pass till all these things be fulfilled" (Matt. xxiv. 34; Mark xiii. 30; Luke xxi. 32); "Verily, I say unto you, there be *some* standing here who shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom" (Matt. xvi. 28; Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 27). Thus is explained the unique fact of the most direct, enthusiastic, Christian, spiritual life surviving from year to year with undiminished power. And by means of this fact we are able to comprehend two others: on the one hand, the undaunted spirit with which the first apostles preached the "*crucified Messiah*," though they knew that, in spite of its corresponding in many points with ancient national prophecy, this must ever seem to the predominant spirit of Judaism a desecration of all that was most sacred to the people (see p. 8); and, on the other hand, the confidence of minds which were satisfied, and more than satisfied, in their own religion, with which the first apostles defended their gospel against the Apostle of the Gentiles, "born out of due season," yet in many respects so superior to them in mental and spiritual power.

A serious contest within the Christian community itself was inevitable, for the purely personal character of the primitive Christian piety acted at the same time as a *restraint* against which the deepest principle of Christianity was compelled to rebel, in order to maintain its own existence.

So long as the inner relation to the crucified Messiah remained *only* one of feeling, and sought for no logical foundation or expression, the Christ who was preached at Jerusalem must continue to be identical with the Christ with whom the apostles had lived, and whose fears and hopes they had shared; the Christ whom Peter had confessed in the name of the whole circle of the disciples (Matt. xvi. 19); the Christ or Messiah of *Israel*, and as such the Son of the living God. For Peter himself, speaking for the other disciples, proceeded at once to make it clear that he acknowledged Jesus only as the Messiah of the hopes of the Jewish people, to the great indignation of the Master himself (Matt. xvi. 21—23). And in spite of repeated correc-



tion, the national Messianic hope re-appears again and again among the first apostles, and is supported by the amazing manifestations of personal power on the part of their Master (comp. Matt. xvii. 23, xx. 19—21, xxvi. 31). Even when he had died upon the cross, the question, "Ought he not to have suffered such things?" had its source in the return to their memory of passages in the writings of their national prophets. Whenever Jesus had told them of the sufferings that awaited him, they had been "troubled." And when these sufferings came upon him, they were "an offence," and the disciples fled. When the days of terror were past, and he who was dead appeared to them, the sight of his glory gathered them together again, and, seeing the royal glory of the resurrection, they believed the saying, *Crucified, and yet the Messiah*. "Jesus of Nazareth," of whom David and the prophets bear witness, is the subject of Peter's first speech (Acts ii. sqq.). The perversity of the Jews who persecuted and slew the prophets of old, which has now culminated in the crucifixion of "this just One," is the subject of Stephen's speech (Acts vii.). In addition to this purely national conception of the Messiahship of Jesus, arising from the personal relation of the first apostles to the transfigured Jesus of Nazareth, two other circumstances tended to make the first Christian community simply a "sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts xxiv. 5):—on the one hand, the woes of their country, whose most sacred possessions suffered increasing wrong at the hands of the Roman emperors, and which was regarded for that very reason with a deeper, warmer love by all the faithful sons of Palestine, and faithful guardians of the honour of the temple; and, on the other hand, the various points of contact which the primitive apostolic view offered on its religious side, not only to the universally recognized prophecies of the Old Testament, but also to the tendencies of contemporary sects and parties.

Even the sect of the Pharisees, the democratic party of the faithful adherents of the law (the strength of which dates from the severe contest in the second century B.C. with the nation's

hereditary enemies of Syria), seemed, in spite of its cruel opposition to the Christianity of the Nazarenes, to render a complete rupture with the national religion unadvisable in more respects than one. The original influence of the spirit of this party upon the training of Jesus himself, was no less certain than the irreconcilable opposition between the Pharisees and the Master which gradually developed in the course of his life. And after the death of Jesus, their common zeal for the privileges of Israel and for the maintenance of the ancient law (Acts xxi. 20), and an agreement in opinion as to the future of the Messiah, formed a bond of union between them, not openly acknowledged indeed, but concealed beneath their various feuds. The same thing was true in a still greater degree of the Essenes, though they had of course far less influence in the nation. It is certainly very evident that in Jesus there was little of the artificial mystery of a "master of the order of Essenes" (comp. Matt. v. 14—16), and that neither he nor the religion which he founded show any clear traces of a marked Essenic influence; but it is equally evident that there was an unsought fellowship between the Essenic and the primitive Christian spirit, in the strictness of morals bordering upon asceticism, in the sentiment of "an all-embracing human love," in the rejection of sacrifice, and in the ecstatic communion of daily worship.

Thus the personal origin of primitive apostolic Christianity, and the national ties of blood and affection, united to confine Christianity within the limits of Palestine, in spite of its natural tendency to press forwards, and the powerful impulses of its early enthusiasm. The commission "to all nations" was soon forgotten.

But it was impossible that it should not come back to their memory. For it lay in germ in the very doctrine of a crucified Messiah. Misunderstood at Jerusalem, it comes in the solitude of Hauran (see Vol. II., *Introd. to the Pauline Epistles*), and knocks at the heart of an apostle "born out of due season." A gospel of Paul first takes its stand by the side of the gospel of



Peter and his companions, then takes a position opposed to it, and yet rests all the time upon the very same ground.

Crucified, and yet the Messiah,—this to the personal disciples of Jesus was the expression of their love and their hopes ; to Paul it was the enigma of his life and his thought. And he solved it by drawing from this one gospel two new conclusions :

If Jesus be the Messiah and yet crucified, then he is not the Messiah of the Jews alone. For the crucified Messiah stands in the sharpest opposition to *their* Messiah. The old Jewish prophets could imagine a Messiah suffering for a time ; but they could never imagine a Messiah crucified. If salvation comes through such an one, then it comes to the heathen also (Gal. iii. 13, 14). Thus the gospel was delivered from Jewish exclusiveness, and its *universal* application was secured.

And again, if Jesus be the Messiah and yet crucified, a king and yet visited by the suffering of shame in the sight of men, and a curse in the sight of God, such shameful woe in him, who was to be the fairest of the sons of men, could not be the result of chance, but must be founded in the will of God for the salvation of man ; it must be the offering of reconciliation for the sins of men, the true foundation of a *new* kingdom of Jesus Christ, a moral kingdom. Thus the gospel was delivered from the law, the formality, the “carnality” of Judaism, and its *spiritual* nature was preserved (comp. Introd. to Ep. to Rom. and Ep. to Gal.).

Thus the Christianity of an improved Jewish *law* and a privileged Jewish *nationality* is met by Christianity as the religion of the *Spirit* (“Idealism”) and as the religion of *Humanity* (“Universalism”), making new demands upon individuals and new claims upon the community of nations. Only the final *goal* remained the same in both cases ; viz. the return of Jesus Christ to establish his kingdom. It was inevitable that the paths of the gospel of Paul and the gospel of Peter should divide. It was equally inevitable that they should re-unite. In the midst of such contests and such reconciliations the writings of the New Testament have their origin.

## THE PERIOD DOWN TO THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

At Antioch the die was cast. There Paul broke away from the principles of the primitive apostolic preaching (see Vol. II., Introd. to the Pauline Epistles). There he separated for a time from Barnabas, who had hitherto been his most faithful friend (Gal. ii. 13, comp. 2 Cor. ix. 6). The position of the two parties with regard to one another did not remain the same, and the Jewish Christians were far from following always and everywhere the noble and wise example of the three older apostles. Before the division took place at Antioch, Paul had promised to make a collection for the community at Jerusalem (Gal. ii. 10). He kept the promise in his heart that he might show his friendly feeling in spite of opposing opinions, and worked far harder than he was now in any way bound to do to carry it out thoroughly. But at the very time that he was thus engaged, he was dogged at every step by the active opposition of Jewish Christian depreciation, slander and bigotry.

Shut out from Palestine (Gal. ii. 7), and finding Asia Minor too narrow a sphere for his activity, in obedience to a vision he ventured upon the most important and, since the events which had taken place in Antioch, the most decisive step in his life. He crossed over to Europe (53 A.D.), and here at last his labours lay beyond the reach of the Jewish Christians and their emissaries. In Philippi he has to deal with mercenary heathen, and there, in the house of Lydia the dyer in purple, he founds the first little Christian community upon European soil. In Thessalonica, fanatical, stiff-necked Jews (1 Thess. ii. 14—16; Acts xvii. 5) drive him from the more important and influential church recently founded there, and this induces him to write from Corinth *the First Epistle to the Thessalonians* (A.D. 54. There are some scholars who consider that this Epistle is not genuine). Still he could not satisfy his longing personally to foster the young community which had been so happily planted



in the chief city of Macedonia. Twice "Satan" hindered him (1 Thess. ii. 18), and it was this hindrance alone which induced him to write the letter to the Thessalonians of which we have spoken. The object of this Epistle is to confirm his gospel amongst them against the attacks of the Jews, and especially so to strengthen and at the same time calm their expectations of the return of Christ, that their moral conduct, the good order of the congregation and the cheerfulness of their own minds, may further testify to the power of the gospel of Christ. A second Epistle followed, but this has not been preserved to us in its original form. The Christians of Thessalonica, who were mostly Gentiles, could not adapt themselves properly to the idea of the return of Christ, an idea which was new and strange to them. One part of the community makes the Messianic expectation a plea for dishonouring the doctrine of the cross by indolence and all manner of disorder arising therefrom (2 Thess. iii. 12), and makes the church a spectacle to the Jews. Then the apostle is compelled once more to supply the want of his personal presence by a letter of reproof, in which he earnestly calls the disorderly and idle to order and quiet industry in the peace of God (2 Thess. iii. 12—18), as the best preparation for the return of the Lord.

And yet while the apostle writes thus, he is reaping in Corinth the very fruit which the Jewish Christians most envied the preachers of the gospel to the Gentiles. There is no place on the line of Paul's first European journey where his preaching was in a greater degree, what he himself afterwards boasts of with gratitude, "a manifestation of the Spirit" (1 Cor. ii. 4). There was no place where he had been more forcibly compelled, even by external circumstances, to seek the power of his preaching in the original contents of the Word of the Cross, and in the simple revelation of the Divine will for our salvation free from every human addition and support (1 Cor. i. 23). It is to the Corinthians that he confesses, "When I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. xii. 10), for amongst them he learnt it. There, in view of Acrocorinth, with its citadel and temples, dwelling in the midst of the whirl

of wealth, science and art, if he wished to be strong after the fashion of Corinth he was nothing, and yet in the power of the Cross of Christ he could do all things,—could stay the tide of the fashionable life of that great city in heathen hearts, and secure a hearing for rude and homely speech concerning sin and salvation. And finally, in no place had his preaching kindled a more vigorous flame; the warmest fire of Messianic enthusiasm of which primitive Christianity had ever been capable, was here united with the direct action of the spirit free from the law, and the divine “gifts of grace” (1 Cor. xii.) of the first Christian inspiration, richer here than in any other of the Christian churches, seemed to vouch for a long continuance of the freshness of the life of the church at Corinth.

But from this lofty peak of inward and outward success, the apostle was soon to descend to the depths of bitter disenchantment and passionate defence against odious opponents. When he leaves Corinth (A.D. 55), and visits the churches in Asia Minor which he had founded on his two previous missionary journeys, and among them those in the “land of Galatia” (Acts xvi. 6), he finds the seed which he had scattered there is poisoned by the influence of the Jewish-Christian party, more especially in those very congregations of Galatia which formerly, under the powerful impression made by his person and his speech, esteemed him worthy of divine honours (Gal. iv. 14), and now actually listened to teachers who would not even acknowledge his apostolic office. He exerted himself, not without success, to restore again the fitting relations between himself and his “little children” (Gal. iv. 19). But scarcely has he turned away again to pursue his journey to Ephesus, when his opponents renew their attack upon him and his preaching. And the “foolish,” who allow themselves a second time to be bewitched, compel him, in the passionate words of the Epistle to the Galatians (A.D. 55, 56), to give historical proof of his complete apostolic equality with the first apostles, and to renounce the privileges of Israel as swallowed up in the liberty with which Christ has made us free (Gal. v. 1). Finally, when



from Ephesus he has so far restored due order in Galatia that he is able as an apostle of Jesus Christ to make arrangements in the churches there for the "collection" about which he was so anxious (1 Cor. xvi. 1), he is troubled by sad news from Corinth. Fierce dissensions have brought desolation into the churches there.

As if Christ were divided, two parties stand opposed in feud with one another. Jewish-Christian intruders, on the one hand, have made the followers of Paul and Apollos (see *Introd. to Heb.*) into mere Pauline zealots, on the other hand; and have thus brought on an uncharitable contest in the church. The one party misused the name of Peter and even the sublime majesty of Jesus Christ himself in their contest with the gospel of the Gentiles. The others exaggerated the true Christian greatness of the apostle Paul till they almost made him equal to the Redeemer (1 Cor. i. 12, 13). This contest most seriously endangered the moral improvement which had been so laboriously attained, and the pious order of the life of the community. But the apostle could not long remain ignorant on which side the disturbance had arisen. He is impelled to go and oppose those who thus disturbed the peace of the church face to face. Meanwhile he twice calls both parties to order by letters from Ephesus. (The first of these letters is lost, the second is our *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, written in the spring of the year 78.) Then he sets off to travel through Macedonia to Greece. It would surely seem that he might hope that the hymn of love, which he had dedicated to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xiii.), had kindled a fire in their hearts which would cleanse and purify both their individual character and the life of the church. But the journey itself is embittered by fresh news of the lapse of a part of the community. From Macedonia (in the autumn of 58) he is compelled in a third letter (our *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*) to pour out the vials of his wrath upon their personal faithlessness to him, which he never feels so bitterly as now, and at the same time upon their forgetfulness of the divine confirmation of his

gospel. Only when he has been able (in the winter of 58-59), by months of personal intercourse with the community, to make them feel the weight of his glowing love and earnest zeal, does he so far restore the power of his gospel here that he is able to turn his attention to Rome. In the spring of 59, he quietly and earnestly lays the foundation of his gospel among the believers in Rome, who were mostly Jewish Christians, and effectually disposes of the charges of his opponents there (see Vol. II., Introduction to the Epistle to the Romans).

The Epistle, as is clearly stated, was only intended to be a harbinger of the apostle himself. Some thirty months afterwards he came to Rome as a prisoner (in the latter part of the year 61). But he is weary. He "desires to depart." A token of the love which the church at Philippi bears him comes to him like a warm breath of life. Ever since his first journey into Greece, its members have remained faithful, and clung to him with genuine Macedonian endurance, and now they send him, by the hand of their teacher Epaphroditus, a contribution in money to supply his wants in his imprisonment (Phil. iv. 18). But even while he thanks them, in the *Epistle to the Philippians* (which is most probably genuine) for this sign of their heartfelt sympathy, the apostle cannot altogether repress his displeasure at the continual return of the old opposition. The same tone pervades an Epistle to the Colossians, written about the same time; and this in spite of the active influence at Colossæ of Philemon, strong in the faith, and so trusty a friend and fellow-labourer that Paul could without hesitation send back to him a slave, Onesimus, who had run away from him, simply begging him, in the *Epistle to Philemon* (either from Rome or Cæsarea), to forgive him. Philemon was not yet able successfully to overcome those who oppressed men's consciences with Jewish-Christian ordinances (Col. ii. 16 sqq.). But the opposition of the Jewish Christians had lost its vital power. At Colossæ, it dealt only with external observances, and became a bigoted adherence to laws concerning meats and drink (Col. ii. 21). At Philippi, it had not yet made way into



the church which Paul had founded, and the apostle could still hope that his own followers might repulse it as they had hitherto done (Phil. iii 1, 2). Though the captious attacks of the Jewish Christians still disgust him, even now when they can no longer have any reasonable hope of overcoming him, he is filled with the hope of victory, and exhorts his faithful comrades to be of good cheer (Phil. iv. 1), for the Lord is at hand. For him truly the Lord is at hand. Paul dies (A.D. 64), and one of the last pictures that floats before his vision is Humanity kneeling at the feet of Jesus, the whole creation humbled before him in the dust (Phil. ii 10).

The death of Paul and the rebellion of the Jews (A.D. 66) are the two events the consequences of which determine the course of Christianity in the years immediately following. The gospel of the Gentiles is deprived of its natural protector. Jewish Christianity, with the revolutionary element of Judaism itself, is in danger of the same fate.

The former must strive to the best of its power to heal the wound which the year 64 has inflicted upon its life and activity; and in circles friendly to Paul, though with many departures from fundamental Pauline principles, arises the *Epistle to the Hebrews*. The latter—Jewish Christianity—must be careful to secure to the community of believers the picture of the Master, his words and deeds, his death and resurrection, that it may not be lost when they are scattered in times of distress, or are even in danger of being completely absorbed again. With this view, the *Gospel according to Matthew* is composed (though some would place this later). The *Epistle to the Hebrews* warns its Jewish-Christian readers (in Alexandria or Rome) to beware of falling back into Judaism, but its chief object is to promote peace between the contending parties. Its testimony to the infinite exaltation of the high-priestly office of Jesus above that of Judaism is at the same time a solemn exhortation to the Jewish Christians to renounce their claims to any superior privileges. The *Gospel according to Matthew*, while collecting into a whole

the fragments of written tradition (see pp. 39—45), and constructing from them a picture of Jesus as the Messiah and of his life, lays the greatest emphasis upon the conservative position of Jesus with regard to the law (Matt. v. 17 sqq.), his faithful adherence to Jewish customs, and the fact that he always remained within the limits of Palestine. But at the same time it takes account of the fact of Gentile Christianity (see pp. 43 sq.), and a place in the kingdom of heaven, though a very humble one, is reserved for the Christians who in the name of Jesus are unfaithful to the Mosaic law (v. 19). Must not the first traces of such toleration be the result of the sufferings which they endured at the hands of a common enemy? And is not this enemy Nero, the imperial monster of Rome, to whose insane cruelty Paul had fallen a victim a short time before? And, again, was it not Nero, who was said to be dead, but whom the Jewish Christians expected to return in the form of Antichrist (see *Introd. to Rev.*), that from him the last bitter woes might fall upon Jerusalem and the temple of God?

But surely these woes were the last. The prospects of the Jewish rebellion were daily becoming darker, and anxious forebodings were spreading among the sons of Palestine and the friends of the sanctuary at Jerusalem, when at Ephesus a Christian seer, perhaps the apostle John, the Son of Thunder, lifted up his voice in words of comfort, and pointed to the glorious victory that lay before the churches of Christ, waiting only until the evil in all its anti-christian fulness should have become incarnate, in order that the Son of Man, descending in the clouds of heaven, might destroy it for ever. The army of Vespasian marches against the holy city. Hopeless ruin threatens the ancient Jerusalem. Then the *Revelation of John* (A.D. 69) proclaims the New Jerusalem which shall arise in all the brilliancy of pure gold and with walls of jasper. The hour of Antichrist draws near. Once already Roman madness in the person of Caligula has demanded divine honours in the temple of God; now the sacrilege is about to be completed. Then the Revelation, with heaven-assailing fervour, beseeches the Lord to come and deliver his people, and hears



his answer as he hastens to the victory (Rev. xix. 11—16), "Yea, I come quickly" (Rev. xxii. 20).

### THE FIFTY YEARS FOLLOWING THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

During the next half century we see a gradual decline of the internal conflicts of Christianity. The main causes of this are evident. First came the disappointment, shared by all alike, of the expectation which formed the central point of all the hopes of the first Christians. This was strongest among the Jewish Christians, who found the turning point of their whole life in the great catastrophe of Judea. But is it possible to suppose that of all the Messianic expectations which Christians cherished in common, just those which were most deeply felt among the Palestinian Christians awoke no echo in the Gentile Christian world? Apart from the special representation of Antichrist which is determined by later historical events, was Paul's description of the return of Christ (1 Thess. iv. 13—v. 8) inconsistent with the prophecies of John? The trumpet has sounded over the saints of God with more than sevenfold power (Rev. viii. 6; comp. 1 Thess. iv. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 52), but it is the trumpet of the victorious Romans. The cry of battle resounds across the city over which Jesus wept, but the graves have not opened. The disappointed followers of Paul need the same comfort and the same strength as those of John, for both alike find their Christianity shaken to its foundations. Perhaps it was at this time that the *Second Epistle to the Thessalonians* was put into the form in which it has reached us. If so, a genuine Second Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians (see p. 10), the original contents of which afforded the greatest facility for the addition of the exhortation and consolation which Christianity so urgently required from the year 70 onwards, must have been put into circulation afresh, with the addition of some interpolations referring to the prophecies of John. By its Pauline origin, and its actual though unexpressed reference to the Johan-

nine prophecy concerning Antichrist, it would be especially adapted to soothe and confirm both sections of the Christian community. "Be not shaken in your mind concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him" (2 Thess. ii. 1, 2). Thus the Apostle Paul must then have written the second time, and then must have been added the words, "And ye know what withholdeth it" (2 Thess. ii. 6 sqq.; see Vol. II., *Intro. to 2 Thess.*), viz., the Roman government, which continued to exist for a time.

However this may be, there was, besides the disappointments of the year 70, and the later common sufferings of the persecutions which lasted till the death of Trajan, another very different event, far more important than all the rest, which also tended gradually to remove the internal dissensions of Christianity, and to prepare the way for a universal Christian Church in the regions of Pauline and Petrine missionary effort. This was the removal of the centre of Christian life to *Rome*. With the destruction of the temple and the decay of the first Christian Messianic hopes, Jerusalem inevitably fell from the important position it held with regard to the future consciousness of Christianity. The capital of the world naturally and even necessarily appropriated the inheritance of the Jewish capital, an inheritance certainly of doubtful value to Rome itself. This event affected the whole of Christianity, enlarged the sphere of vision of both the contending parties, and plainly showed both the adherents of the law and those who were free from the law, the necessity of mutual advances, and a closer external union in the interests of Christianity generally, and in opposition to the heathen empire of the world. Under its influence proceeded from the Petrine party (70—90 A.D.) the *Gospel according to Mark* (pp. 45—47), in conciliatory opposition to the increasing hostility of the anti-Pauline school, which then found expression in the *Epistle of James* (written according to some scholars before 69 A.D.). On the Pauline side, the *Gospel according to Luke* (about 100 A.D.) and the *Acts of the Apostles* by the same writer (100—120 A.D.), undertake to justify on historical



grounds the more peaceful relations which events had gradually established in the actual life of the Christian communities (see Introductions to these books). The *First Epistle of Peter*, in didactic form, pronounces its blessing upon the attempt.

#### THE TWO PARTIES UNITE AGAINST A COMMON FOE.

Even in the second century the traces of this ancient dissension are not extinguished, and down to its very close the remains of the old party fanaticism occasionally make unnatural efforts to revive. But the two schools make common cause against the most dangerous of all opponents, and are thereby so firmly united that all attempts at division, after a short and only apparent success, fail to destroy the sympathy of a common tradition and a common danger. The enemy that was now to be overcome could not but appear more dangerous than the Roman persecution. It was an enemy within the camp. The contact of Christian ideas with the philosophy of Alexandria, the influence of which had powerfully affected the intellectual life of the imperial capital, gave rise in the second century to a school of philosophers (Gnostics) who thought that they should be doing a service to Christianity, and at the same time providing themselves with the worthiest subject of thought and means of mental training, if in the consciousness of the transforming power of the gospel they could lift the appearance and significance of Jesus Christ above the limits of the personal life of the Saviour, and assign him a place in an intellectual system which should embrace the Divine nature and the material universe. Christianity aimed at becoming the universal religion. Must not its Founder then prove to be one of the powers of the universe, whose supernatural home, whose kinship with the Deity, were the justification of this aim and the pledges of victory? This question found an echo in the Christendom of that age, and to many it seemed self-evident that it must be answered in the affirmative. But while by these advances they sought to do honour to their Lord and Master, they were unconsciously

drinking in a dangerous poison. All the Gnostic systems which we shall have to consider (see Introduction to First and Second Epistles to Timothy) had one thing in common; they saw in Christ *one among many* lower divine beings which streamed from the eternal and unapproachable source of the Deity, with a gradual diminution of their Divine nature, until at last, through the lowest and feeblest, the contact of God with the material world appeared possible. It is evident that the person of the Redeemer was thus removed from the commanding central point of the scheme of salvation.

The first century had secured to Christendom its spirituality and the universality of its mission to mankind. The second was taken up in strenuous exertions (compared with which those which were made after the destruction of Jerusalem appeared insignificant) to preserve its *Christianity*, to establish the position of Christ as unique and incomparable, the author and finisher of the salvation of the individual and of humanity. This is more or less exclusively the one object of the rest of the New Testament literature. According to the custom of Christian antiquity, which even in the fifth or sixth century allowed the founder of Greek mysticism in perfect innocence to shelter his Christian ideas under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite (Acts xvii. 34), writers now avail themselves of the respect in which John, Peter and Paul are alike held, and turn it to literary account. Far surpassing all the rest in intrinsic value, in philosophic culture, and in the poetic charm of its style, stand peerless at the head of the list the *Gospel of John* and its twin-brother the *First Epistle of John*. Then follow the *Epistle to the Ephesians* and the *Epistle to the Colossians* in its present form; then the erroneously so-called "*Second*" *Epistle to Timothy*, the *Epistle to Titus*, *First Timothy*, the *Second Epistle of John*; and then probably, as the last members of this family (after 150 A.D.), the *Epistle of Jude* and the *Second Epistle of Peter* (see the respective Introductions). In addition to the predominant characteristic of all these writings, each one has its peculiar form and its special object. But



though the emphasis might be laid now upon the complete unity of Christ with God and his exclusive mediatorship for humanity, now upon the unity of the life of the Christian community in Christ the one Head, and again, finally, upon the fact that Christ is not one member of a varied series of divine natures, but that in him the *fulness* of the Godhead appeared in human form; still the one object always was to grasp the right expression for the fundamental principle of Christianity, which the "Revelation" declared in the words, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, saith the Lord" (Rev. i. 8, 11, xxi. 6, xxii. 13).

Upon this ground which it had now acquired, the "universal" (catholic) Church rested in its first modest beginning. In the year 167, the community at Smyrna reports the death of its bishop Polycrates to catholic sister churches. Even contention as to the paschal festival cannot long disturb the brotherly intercourse of the Christian people, which now extends far and wide; and the *Third Epistle of John* brings the powerful authority of the son of Zebedee to bear in exhorting the various communities, and especially the superiors, to show hospitality to travelling "evangelists," and to afford them every assistance and support in their journeys.

What, then, is the sum of all this? Traces of severe internal strife run through the whole of our New Testament literature. But Christianity only issues from it purified, free, confirmed. Its spirituality (John iv. 24), its destiny to embrace the whole world (John x. 16), are universally recognized. And whereas its first sally into the heathen world was an occasion of division in the camp itself, it can now with united forces make a second sally, still more confident of victory, since it has now a sure guiding star which will show the way in every zone, and in the most distant and unknown regions (John xiv. 5). The First Epistle of John proclaims a faith which has victoriously overcome the world (v. 5). It is this faith which now conquers what has hitherto been invincible, a defiant Roman world.

## II.—HOLY SPIRIT AND HOLY SCRIPTURE.

Complete historical truth, then, especially in relation to the New Testament, is unconditionally on the side of those who reverence the unique and visible influence of the Spirit of God in these writings, and for that very reason absolutely reject the doctrine of their "inspiration" as held by the ancient Church.

Protestant investigation of the New Testament writings has brought to light one portion of the history of the Holy Spirit itself, but it is the history of the spirit of God engaged in a great contest, and the field of action is in men and among men.

Many years after Luther with the power of the Bible had shaken the strongholds of the Church of Rome to their foundations, there arose a doctrine concerning the Bible which appealed to him, and enjoyed the protection of the authority of the ecclesiastical powers. This doctrine made "the Bible" and "the Word of God" synonymous, and declared that the former was merely the dictation of the Holy Spirit, that the sacred writers were its "pens" or "secretaries," and that the Bible therefore constituted a manual of Christianity, and was, in the first place, simply a vessel containing a purely divine substance unaffected by any independent literary co-operation; in the second place, uniformly, in all its parts, the very word of God; and finally, as the logical consequence of this, incapable of error in any point. While every school of modern Protestant theological inquiry has been liberating itself from this tradition of the uniform divine truth of the Bible, the distortion of the so-called "Scripture principle" of the Reformation, which was brought to a climax with pernicious zeal in the seventeenth century, has exerted, and still exerts, a bewildering influence which is incredibly powerful, and which can only be compared with that of the Romish Papal fables of the middle ages. And the effect of this was to impoverish the Bible itself. If the sacred writers are really regarded as the instruments from which the Holy Spirit



with his sounding-rod drew whatever melodies pleased him, if they were simply the "pipes" upon which he played his favourite airs, what was more natural than the endeavour to keep from the Bible every appearance of discord or of contradiction? All the great and varied history of primitive Christianity was violently compressed within the narrow ruts of a meagre uniformity. The sacred writers were degraded, for henceforth they were to be regarded as the servants, not the children, of the Holy Spirit; and so too was the Holy Spirit itself, for only through the servile offices of servants was it to be able to rule in the children of God who had been called to liberty.

#### LUTHER'S VIEW OF SCRIPTURE.

This conception of Scripture just mentioned, with its raw materialism, appeals to the authority of Luther. Let Luther speak for himself:

1. "All that the apostles taught and wrote, they drew from the Old Testament. . . . For the New Testament is no more than a revelation of the Old. It is as if a man had a closed letter, and afterwards broke the seal. So the Old Testament is Christ's letter, which he opened after his death, and caused to be read and proclaimed everywhere through the Gospel.

"God gave to the Jews a written law, that is, the Ten Commandments, superfluously; for they are nothing else than the law of nature, which is by nature written in our heart."

These words of Luther's are sufficient to show that he neither regarded the literary activity of the apostles as independent of the natural national religion of Israel, nor the latter, even in its noblest parts, as the inspiration of the Divine Spirit without the co-operation of natural human reason.

2. The following words of Luther will show that he made great distinctions as to the comparative value of the different books of the Bible:

"The Old Testament is night and darkness in comparison with

the New. And where the Old Testament is best preserved, men's consciences are only terrified at it."

"We will not regard Moses as our lawgiver . . . except he accord with the New Testament and the natural law. . . . Therefore I keep the commandments which Moses gave, not because Moses commanded them, but because they are implanted in me by nature."

"In St. Paul's Epistles the gospel is clearer and brighter than in the four Evangelists; for the four Evangelists described Christ's life and words, which were not understood until after the advent of the Holy Spirit. . . . But St. Paul writes nothing of the life of Christ, but expresses clearly why he came and how we should avail ourselves of him."—(Because) . . . "therefore the Gospel of John is the one tender, right chief Gospel. And so, too, the Epistles of St. Paul and St. Peter far excel the three Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. In sum, the Gospel of St. John and his First Epistle, the Epistles of St. Paul, especially those to the Romans, Galatians and Ephesians, and the First Epistle of St. Peter, these are the books which show thee Christ, and teach thee all that it is needful and blessed for thee to know, even if thou . . . hearest no other book." . . . "Therefore the Epistle of St. James is an Epistle of straw in comparison with them, for it has nothing evangelical about it. The Epistle to the Romans is the true masterpiece of the New Testament, and the purest Gospel of all."—"We will let [the Epistle of James] go along with the rest, for those who wish to keep it, . . . that it may not be thought that we would absolutely reject it, although the Epistle is not written by an apostle, nor altogether of true apostolic kind and stamp, nor entirely in accordance with pure doctrine."

3. Further, that the decision as to the greater or lesser value of any Biblical writing is to be left to the testing power of the evangelic conscience, is shown by the following passages: "We must not consider simply the question whether it be God's word, or whether God hath said it, but rather to whom it is said. . . . One thing concerns me not, . . . another touches me."



"God hath commanded that in matters of faith we should not have regard to any apostle, nor prophet, nor to any other. . . . If they bring God's word, we bid them welcome in God's name. But if it be not God's word, we dismiss them." "It is recorded of Virgil that, having the poet Ennius in his hand, and one asking him what he was doing, he replied, that he was picking gold out of the mire of Ennius. So one might call this, our Lord Christ's gold in the mire, or a precious pearl in the mire. Happy were he who could gather such gold from the paper, from the poor letters and the simple words!"

4. And finally, that the question of the genuineness and historical origin of the Biblical books, and whether they have been accurately preserved to us or not, is to be decided by rational investigation only, is shown first in regard to the Apocrypha by the following expressions :

"The Book of Judith will scarcely fit in with the histories of the Holy Scripture. The reader should regard it as a sacred spiritual poem." "The Wisdom of Solomon judaizes to so great a degree . . . that the Fathers of the Church not without reason held Philo to be the author of this book." "The Book of Tobit is a right fair and profitable poem, the play of a witty poet." "Jesus Sirach hath collected together what is best from many books." "Very slight is the Book of Baruch. We let it go with the rest." "The Second Book of the Maccabees appears to have been patched together out of many books."

And in regard to the books of the Old and New Testament which are received by the Church, the same thing is expressed in the following passages :

"Ecclesiastes . . . has been put together by learned men. The Book of the Proverbs of Solomon also has been pieced together by others. Likewise the Song of Solomon appears also to be a book patched together. Hence, also, no order is preserved in these books." "It seems as though Jeremiah did not compose such books himself." "It appears as though Hosea's prophecy were not written down full and entire, but

certain parts of his discourses were brought together into one book."

"Whether the text (1 Pet. iv. 6) has come down to us entire, or whether something has fallen out, I know not."

"And this (2 Pet. iii. 15, 16) is one of the sayings that might move one to hold that this Epistle is not St. Peter's. . . . For he descends somewhat below the apostolic spirit. Yet it is conceivable that it is none the less the apostle's."

"The Epistle of St. Jude is assigned to the holy apostle St. Jude. But it has not the appearance of being the true apostle's. It is probable that some other pious man wrote this Epistle." "The Epistle of St. Jude is an abstract or copy of St. Peter's Second Epistle. . . . It is an unnecessary Epistle." . . . "The Epistle to the Hebrews is not St. Paul's, nor any apostle's. . . . Methinks it is an Epistle composed of many pieces (perhaps long after the time of apostles), and it is by no means on a par with the apostolic Epistles."—(St. James' Epistle) "I do not esteem as the writing of an apostle. . . . But this James drives us to the law and its works, and confuses one thing with another so unskilfully, that methinks it must have been some good, pious man that put down on paper some sayings of the disciples of the apostles . . . long after St. Peter and St. Paul. Therefore I cannot place it among the true chief books." "I hold this book (The Revelation) neither apostolic nor prophetic . . . and I can see no sign that it was under the direction of the Holy Spirit. . . . My spirit cannot enter into the book. . . . I esteem it not highly."

Such is Luther's "Scriptural principle." It did not hinder him from declaring, in opposition to the claims of ecclesiastical *tradition*, that the Holy Scripture was the sole source and rule of evangelical truth. It did not forbid him to estimate the value of the "simple" and "plain" word of the Bible as higher than that of any other visible thing, "higher than heaven and earth," and in its ultimate religious contents "altogether beyond our grasp." It did not hinder him from occasionally, when it "concerned" him, arbitrarily straining some word of the Bible in order



to prove some Christian doctrine which appeared to him necessary. Nor has it preserved him from errors here and there in his first attempt at an historical investigation of the Biblical writings. And finally, it did not allow him to perceive the full results in the future of his declaration of independence.

But he is the worst possible authority for the verbal infallibility of the Bible, and hence for the infallibility of the Bible altogether. For the Christian value of the Holy Scriptures may be variously estimated, and so may their historical credibility; but with regard to the *infallibility of the letter* of the Bible, there is no "more" or "less," but only "either . . . or." Either the letter is infallible, or it is not; i.e. either it is infallible everywhere, or it is infallible nowhere. And if this doctrine of infallibility is to be regarded as a command, we must obey absolutely; but if it is to be a matter for investigation and proof with regard to individual portions of Scripture, it is submitted to fallible human judgment and is ipso facto annulled.

So then it is good evangelicalism, and indeed essentially good Lutheranism, to believe, (1) concerning "*The Authority of the Bible*," that it is founded on a becoming reverence for the Holy Scripture as the channel of Christian truth, but that it is nowhere binding in the letter; (2) concerning "*The Word of God*," that it is in the Holy Scripture as the good news of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, but that it must never be confounded with the letter of any of the sacred writings; (3) concerning "*The Inspiration of the Bible by the Holy Spirit*," that the abundant revelations of the Divine Spirit lifted the first bearers of Christian truth far above their surroundings in piety, but never infused into them a definite expression of the saving will of God in Christ, which should be binding for ever; and further, that this "Inspiration" did not cease when the Bible was completed, but is still the mainspring of the Christian life.

And this belief concerning the Bible is especially Biblical.

At the very time when the earliest Christian literature was attaining more general recognition and honour in Christendom,

the *authority* of every "divinely-inspired writing" was made to rest upon its *profitableness* for doctrine, for punishment, for correction, for discipline in righteousness (2 Tim. iii. 16).

And the "*Word of God*"? Once only was it, according to the Johannine conception, "made flesh" (John i. 14), and in him from whom we have not a single written word. "Man lives by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. iv. 4),—that is, by the unintermittent creative word of the Almighty power that sustains the world. Paul regards his own preaching as "in truth the Word of God" (1 Thess. ii. 13). He does not mean his canonical Epistles, for he is at the very time only writing the first of them, but his message of the grace of God in Christ, which he derives "not from men," but rather from the direct witness which the living Jesus bears to himself in his conversion, in the success of his apostolic labours, and also in his apostolic tribulation.

And finally, the "*Holy Spirit*." Its revelations are to testify of Jesus to his disciples (John xv. 26), and they lead into all truth (John xvi. 13). But we nowhere read that this "truth from the Spirit" is *comprehensible* in adequate human language. The *incomprehensibility* of the manner in which it bloweth is expressed in this very book (John iii. 8); its fruits are described as altogether spiritual (Gal. v. 22). And where the Holy Spirit grants its highest revelation to the first Christians, or takes the deepest and most convulsive hold of their souls, there appears the unutterable vision of ecstasy (2 Cor. xii. 4), or the holy excitement followed by utter exhaustion, when the word dies on the tongue, and he of whose soul the Spirit has taken possession, faint with the enjoyment of heavenly delight, utters unintelligible sounds (1 Cor. xiv. 2—33, xii. 10; see commentary on Acts ii. 4, 10, 46, xix. 6).



## III.—THE VARIOUS KINDS OF INTERPRETATION.

The oldest method of interpreting the New Testament is the symbolical. It rests upon the example of Jesus and the apostles in their interpretation of the Old Testament. The main object of their interpretation was to find in the Old Testament documents prophetic symbols of the New Testament and the history of Jesus, which should be as "bridges to unite the memories with the hopes of the nation," and the transition to the allegorical method was an easy one. In Alexandria, a literary school, formed under Greek influence, had long sought out deeply-hidden meanings in the Old Testament, and in the third century this city became the home of the Christian arts of interpretation. Indeed, this Alexandrine philosophy, in combination with the Christianity of the fourth Gospel, produced a formal system of New Testament interpretation which was equally ingenious and arbitrary. This system handed over the natural meaning of the words to the simple, sought a "moral" interpretation for the more advanced, and promised the "discerning" the discovery of a "mystic" meaning altogether different from that of the letter (*"allegory"*). The power of this method of interpretation lay partly in the abundant provision which it made for the varied requirements of edification, partly in its infinite flexibility, which made it possible not only for the third century, but for others also, to find room for their ideas within those of the first and second. Placing itself now at the service of Alexandrine theology or philosophy, now at the service of the ecclesiastical belief of that intermediate period to which it belongs, this method of interpretation always enriched the Scriptures to such a degree by the introduction of its own modes of thought, that it actually to some extent withdrew the Bible itself from the Church.

2. *The dogmatic* method of interpreting the New Testament is essentially only one of the various allegorical methods. The

expression of Christian doctrine which is publicly recognized at such and such time and in such and such a place, is taken as the rule by which to test the correctness of the interpretation. This method is the surest support of the essential elements of every Christian confession and sect. Since the seventeenth century it has been more especially the common property of the Catholic and a certain portion of the Protestant Church. Only in the former the superiority of ecclesiastical doctrinal tradition to the sacred writings is acknowledged as a principle; in the latter it is maintained that the two agree with one another.

3. *The rationalistic* interpretation of the New Testament writings is a daughter of the eighteenth century, a sister of sound common sense. With a view partly to defending and partly to regaining for the history of Jesus and the apostles its "citizenship in the natural order of things," it aimed at finding natural solutions and explanations of the miraculous events in the New Testament narrative. It must be confessed that it often simply "substituted the marvellous for the miraculous."

4. *The literal historical* method of interpretation is the only one that has any proper place in the Protestant Church. Some attempts at it were made, indeed, long before the time of Protestantism. In the fourth century, the conscience of the first theologians of Antioch heard its loud demands for admission; the greatest pulpit orator of the age submitted his preaching to its rude discipline, and yet his hearers found that he spoke "golden" words. But in the West it scarcely found any support except among the heretics with whom St. Augustine contended; and in the East it was to all intents and purposes absolutely silenced by the spirit of the age. In the later middle ages it had here and there a few supporters. In these, Luther recognized the forerunners of his purposes. But he himself always found the Scripture too serviceable for the purpose of his reform of faith, to follow logically and uniformly in the track of these forerunners. Dogmatism and rationalism distorted the language of the Bible in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for their own



purposes. It was only *when the tyranny of rationalism itself was overthrown*, when piety was experienced and recognized as a matter of feeling, and therefore comprehended as a great and independent reality—independent, that is, of the changing ideas of the centuries,—it was only then that the true historical sense could be aroused, which strove to do justice not only to the later stages of the development of Christianity, but also to primitive Christian life, by its disinterested inquiry and representation. The first aim of this literal historical method is to give the exact meaning of the language of the sacred writers. The second is to estimate conscientiously the amount of credence to be given to them, on the basis of external and internal evidence from contemporary ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical literature. By these means alone does it seek to obtain a picture of the life of primitive Christianity, without in any instance toning down its supernatural colouring.

Moreover, it leaves to the sacred writers all the belief in the miraculous which belonged to their age, and the magic circle of ideas which tinge with varied hues the nature and course of their love to Jesus Christ, and to his God and their God. Its own business is simply to obtain from the available sources a faithful representation of the history of this devotion, and to explain it as clearly as possible in the light of connected contemporary history, and according to those rules of historical investigation which are recognized as valid elsewhere.

Historical inquiry refuses to recognize, even in the most extraordinary eras of humanity, any breach of the natural laws, seeing only the highest tension, within the natural order, of the powers which God has given to man. And so the historical account of Christianity, if it is to be really historical, can never acknowledge any breach in the divine order of the universe. And this principle compels it to recognize the miracles of Jesus just so far as they can be explained by the extreme mental and spiritual tension of that powerful personal influence in which Jesus so far surpassed all around him (see note on Matt. iv. 28). Further, historical

inquiry, in dealing with the documents of any age or nation, must take account of the legendary factor, especially when the documents themselves treat of religion. And the interpretation of the primitive Christian documents must not assume that it is relieved from the necessity of such precaution, especially as a very great number of the miraculous narratives of the New Testament betray their own origin by their concluding reference to Old Testament prophecy ("This was done in order that it might be fulfilled," &c.). On the other hand, in regard to *details*, it confesses its inability always to separate clearly and with certainty the actual history from the pious legends which have clustered around it, or always to point out the exact limit at which the miracles narrated of Jesus cease to be possible. Finally, the value of this method to Christian piety is this: it enables any kind of love to Jesus which seeks after salvation to complete the labour in the New Testament documents, which makes the Bible still remain for the present and future generations in itself edifying and life-giving, even without any edifying interpretation. And this it does by separating the primitive Christian circle of ideas, which no Christian any longer accepts in its entirety, from the religious substance of the gospel, which unites all Christians as followers of Christ.

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#### IV.—THE COLLECTION OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCUMENTS.

In the Western Church the canonical collection of Christian writings was closed in the fifth century. The first collections were made under the guiding influence of the two opposing parties of primitive Christianity. The Gnostic *Marcion*, who flourished about the middle of the first century, collected in the interests of Paulinism ten Epistles of Paul and a Gospel narrative which he compiled from the Gospel according to St. Luke, at the same time increasing its Pauline tendency, and which he called simply



“Gospel.” On the other hand, the collection of *Justin*, who writes between 147 and 160 A.D., contained, in addition to the Gospel according to St. Luke, the two primitive apostolic Gospels of Matthew and Mark, and perhaps also the Johannine Gospel: the Epistles of Paul are excluded. The collectors of the two following centuries were not such decided partizans. The value which they assigned to the individual writings was mainly settled according to the greater or less amount of ancient and venerable Christian testimony which they contained. Still, even in the most important decisions of the fourth century, there is a great want of logic and consistency. In the West, the collection was finally closed in the Church by a “decree” of the Roman bishop Gelasius I. This decree, the authenticity of which has been doubted, though without sufficient reason, was issued about the year 495 A.D., and included in the collection all the New Testament writings which are found in the Bible of the present day. The order was somewhat different from ours. In many manuscripts, too, the Epistle to the Hebrews is wanting. To this decree was appended a special list of the early Christian writings which were excluded from the canon of ecclesiastical authority.

# THE GOSPELS.

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## 1. NAME.

IN the language of the Bible itself, the word Gospel<sup>1</sup> never denotes a written work. It originally signified good message, joyful tidings (see, for example, 2 Sam. xviii. 20). Its use in the New Testament is based, in the first instance, upon the passage in Isaiah (lxi. 1), which Jesus himself adopted as the happy expression of the substance and aim of his public ministry (Luke iv. 18). And so the word Gospel soon forms the standing title, which indicates very expressively the new subject-matter which is to be offered to the world, and spread into all countries. "Whosoever the gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of," says Jesus of the woman at Bethany (Mark xiv. 9). In this expression we find the beginning of the change of meaning. The Gospel is no longer simply the substance of the preaching of the kingdom itself, but the account of the Messiah and his career. The apostle Paul also frequently uses the word Gospel in the sense, not of the substance of his preaching, but of the treatment of the message (e.g. 2 Cor. viii. 18). Finally, the Epistle to the Ephesians speaks of Evangelists (Eph. iv. 11 ; cf. also 2 Tim. iv. 5); and upon this and the mention of Philip "the Evangelist" (Acts xxi. 8) rests the supposition that in the apostolic communities there were certain men who had a special gift and calling for the oral presentation of the facts of primitive Christianity, and

<sup>1</sup> In German *Evangelium*, derived through the Latin from the Greek *εὐαγγέλιον*, which is the word used in the New Test. and in the Greek version of the passages referred to in 2 Sam. and Isaiah.—*Trans.*



who formed the personal links in the chain of evidence concerning Christ. From this it is only a step to the later use of the word which we find in the Church from the time of Justin Martyr (see p. 32). Marcion's Gospel (see p. 31) made no mention of its author, but towards the end of the second century—according to the testimony of Chrysostom, one of the Fathers—the four names were prefixed to the four Gospels by which we still distinguish them, and which are usually taken to indicate their authorship.

The original form, however, is not, for example, "Gospel of Matthew," but "Gospel according to Matthew;" and this might mean some other writer's redaction of Matthew's account. In the same manner, when the ancient Christians spoke of a "Gospel according to Peter," we can scarcely suppose them to have meant that he wrote it, but only that the name indicated the tendency of the work, and was the guarantee for its contents. And so, before there was any written Gospel, Paul spoke of his "Gospel" (Rom. ii. 16, xvi. 25). And we might quite as well call the Gospel according to St. Luke the "Gospel according to Paul," just as there was formerly on the other side a "Gospel according to the Twelve Apostles," which meant a Gospel in the spirit and in accordance with the ideas of the twelve as contrasted with Paul, or a "Gospel according to the Hebrews," which name only indicates the Jewish-Christian tradition upon which it rested.

Moreover, this method of denoting the four canonical writings seems to be the result of the opinion that there is properly only one Gospel, and that the varieties of form are due simply to the various channels of tradition. The name in common use is an abbreviated expression, and the full title would be, Gospel of Jesus Christ (Mark i. 1). In fact, Irenæus, one of the Fathers who read the titles as we have them, regarded the four channels as a special provision made by the Holy Spirit against error; and he thus confirms our view of the unity of the subject and variety of channels. It is in this connection that he introduces the well-known comparison with the cherub, which, according to

Ezekiel (i. 10), is a single being, and yet displays four forms, the angel (Matthew), lion (Mark), bull (Luke), and eagle (John).

## 2. ORIGIN.

The Gospels belong, comparatively speaking, to the later portion of the New-Testament writings. It is only by the oral tradition on which they rest that the historical narratives of the New Testament are connected with the earliest period of Christianity. Jesus himself wrote nothing, but, to use the happy phrase of the fourth Gospel, he "called aloud to the world" what he had heard from the Father (John viii. 26). His audience was always, at least in spirit, and ultimately in point of fact also, the whole people, and indeed the whole human race. The eternal youth of his word has been chiefly manifested by the very fact that for a century it passed through the world of human thought preserved only by oral tradition, yet withstanding even in this form everything that tended to weaken or destroy its essence, and still maintaining its freshness and originality.

First of all, striking aphoristic expressions, parables and prophecies, were handed down from mouth to mouth. Thus an oral tradition was formed. And once formed, it assumed a more and more uniform character, and the expressions became to a certain extent fixed. This method of preserving the Gospel history for some time prevailed universally; and it still continued to exist, side by side with the written narratives, till towards the middle of the second century. The Gospels, even when they had already been in existence for a considerable time, had no official authority whatsoever. A certain Papias wrote his "Commentary on the Sayings of the Lord" from the oral tradition of the disciples of the apostles, although he was acquainted with the written remains of Matthew and Mark. In the writings of the apostolic Fathers, which are historically in immediate connection with the New Testament, our Gospels are scarcely mentioned. Only by slow degrees was public opinion compelled by their intrinsic value to



acknowledge their authority. Nothing is more certain than that the written narrative was not treated in the earliest period with the care which we should have expected, if there had actually been in its compilation a primary intention of establishing a documentary account confirmed by eye-witnesses, still less with the care that would have been devoted to the creation of a sacred and infallible letter of Scripture.

A new generation was required to awaken any interest in literary attempts in this direction. Jesus himself had made no provision for anything of his being written, or for anything being written about him. His immediate disciples were altogether unaccustomed to any kind of literary labour, and nothing was further than questions of literature and scholarship from the thoughts of the first Christian communities, which looked from dawn to dawn for the return of the Messiah and the end of the whole present course of the world. Even Paul, the earliest writer of Christendom, only wrote when he was compelled to do so, because it was not possible to have oral communication with the communities he addressed. In his writings he certainly reminds us here and there of important sayings of Jesus (1 Thess. iv. 15; 1 Cor. vii. 10, xi. 25), but with the exception of the account of the Last Supper, which he introduces incidentally, he only presents us with the dark picture of the death on the cross, and the bright dawn of the resurrection, in which is comprehended for him the whole import of his preaching of the historical Jesus. And even these things he refers to, not as matters of historical interest, but because they are essential to faith. Only by degrees was the religious interest followed by the historical. Going back from the death of Jesus, living memory supplied first the history of the passion, then the thread of the history was followed back through the Galilean ministry to its beginning at the baptism, and afterwards, indeed, still further back to the birth of Jesus. Separate sketches were collected together in groups, and gradually united into a finished history of the life and death of Jesus, full, and in the main complete in itself. And thus was formed a Gospel History.

### 3. HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS.

The result which we have described could only be reached when the apostles and immediate disciples of Jesus had one by one trodden the path of death, and none was left who of his own knowledge could teach concerning "all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us" (Acts i. 21). Then the transition began from the wavering oral tradition to the written, and in this process the legendary element which breathed here and there in the tradition was increased, more or less consciously according to the extent of the additions, by the imagination of the writers. These writers desired first of all to edify and instruct; and in some cases, as for example in the narrative of the Temptation, it is difficult indeed to decide how much is intended to be historical, and how much, on the other hand, is didactic. Nothing in the Bible is more characteristic of the spirit of the East than this tendency, which prevails throughout, to transform simple narrative into the symbol and channel of higher religious and moral truth. One circumstance especially must here be carefully noticed, which could not but have a most enduring effect. To the influence of the Old-Testament idea of the Messiah, by which they were involuntarily affected (especially of such passages as Is. xxix. 18 sq., xxxv. 5 sq., xlii. 7), was added in time the deliberate imitation of the Old-Testament historical books which were always present before the eyes of our Evangelists as the models for their own literary compositions. The writers stood within the circle of Jewish life, and consequently lived and moved in those images and narratives; and, in addition to this, their own Messianic belief imperiously demanded that in the Messiah should be fulfilled and surpassed all that the Old Testament could narrate of its greatest men of God, especially of Moses and Elias. Jesus himself had made the Old Testament the basis of his whole history. Oral tradition, and then later the authors of the written accounts, only pursued the same lines still



further. And so it is often difficult to recognize the dividing line between history and legendary imitations of the Old Testament which have moulded the speech and career of Jesus. In each special case we shall always call the reader's attention to the effect of such Old-Testament influence and types.

The transition of the oral account into a written one may be explained by two causes. On the one hand, the increasing uncertainty of the oral tradition aroused a feeling of the necessity of securing what had so far been preserved. Luke (i. 4) expressly states the historical purpose of his writing. But a purely and exclusively historical interest does not exist in early Christianity. There is always connected with it the practical question of faith, and of the special school of faith. And indeed in the time of the earliest apostolic preaching this has far more weight than the historical interest. The idea of Christ himself was different in the different schools, and to each school it seemed natural and expedient to make a suitable selection from the material which was available, and sometimes even to make substantial additions and alterations. We know of the existence of the "apocryphal" and "heretical" Gospels, as they are called, such as the Gospel of the Hebrews (Jewish Christians), of the Egyptians, and of many Gnostic schools; but only a few fragments of these now remain.

But in our "canonical" Gospels, as they are called, the same religious interest of faith prevails; the most important historical questions are only incidentally touched upon. History is here written, not as Herodotus wrote, but "that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye may have life in his name" (John xx. 31).

One purpose, then, sways these writings from first to last, sometimes more generally, sometimes more especially and definitely. The recognition of this fact will enable us to answer the question how it is that from a literature which gradually became so rich, only our present five historical books were received into the New-Testament collection. They are not the only ones, nor the

oldest, known to the ancient Church. Before Luke, "many had taken it in hand" (Luke i. 1), and our present Gospels are all based upon earlier writings. Even of the "Apocrypha" which we have mentioned, there are some which are not very inferior in age to our Gospels. But since the end of the second century these have all been excluded. The reason is, that their party aims appeared to carry them beyond the limits which Christian thought allows. In addition to this, there was the relation, which we have described, to the historical books of the Old Testament; all these bear a religious rather than a historical stamp, and the same marvellous thread runs through the historical representations of the New Testament. The writers adopt the narrative form of the Old Testament. Matthew is connected with it by the actual facts of his narrative; Luke by its form at least, and by the colouring of his language. In the former we find the relation of prophecy and fulfilment fully worked out; in the latter we find Paulinism. That is to say, there is in each a distinct selection and colouring of historical material which in itself had no connection with either of these later opposing tendencies. Only in comparatively rare cases does this interest of a special school and conception extend to a complete reconstruction of the old narrative and the free play of the imaginative and inventive powers.

#### 4. THE THREE FIRST GOSPELS.

In regard to the last point we have mentioned, there is a marked and important difference between the fourth Gospel and the first three. The first three represent in every particular an earlier stage, and adhere more closely to the popular tradition. The fourth Gospel follows a distinct line of its own, and has a style of its own altogether different from that of the first three, the existence of which it assumes. The first three, on the other hand, must be read together as three kindred accounts with an unmistakable resemblance to one another. The thread of the narrative is the same in all three, and the three accounts can be



placed in sections side by side, and brought into one common view. In all three accounts the arrangement of material—the frame, so to speak, of the picture—is the same. In many cases, moreover, they agree in a remarkable manner—in style, order of words, peculiarities of expression, and even rare forms. Hence the possibility, we may say the necessity, of bringing them together under one view, and hence also the name (*Synoptics*) by which scholars usually call them. Nor is it possible to suppose that this resemblance is merely accidental, since Jesus and the apostles spoke Aramaic, and the oldest tradition was in the same language; while the Gospels were all written in Greek, and none of them appears to be a translation. In each of these three accounts, the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus is connected in the same manner with the preaching of John the Baptist. The narrative then first carries us into Galilee, marking off certain periods of the ministry there; for example, the earlier undisturbed teaching by the Sea of Galilee, and the later retirement of Jesus from time to time, which we notice after the feeding of the multitude in the wilderness. The most important epoch of all, however, is marked by the acknowledgment of the Messiahship of Jesus by his disciples. In Cæsarea Philippi, where this takes place, Jesus has reached the most northern point to which his labours extended. From Cæsarea Philippi he journeys southwards to meet the appointed end of his labours in Jerusalem, which he now visits as the Messiah for the first time and the last. The few days which he passes in the capital are sufficient to bring about a fatal conflict with the ruling powers. And not only is the general outline the same in the first three Gospels, and different throughout from that of the fourth. They further agree in giving us, not one unbroken history, but a succession of separate short narratives, which are brought into connection with one another by special introductory and concluding phrases. This kind of narrative has been well compared to a succession of pictures in which a painter represents a complete history. And these pictures are

not always laid before us by the three Evangelists in the same order. Each one, moreover, has made his own selection. We may, however, distinguish about sixty such sections, which appear in all three with little variation, and are often verbally identical. Forty appear in Matthew and Luke, and twenty Mark has in common severally with Matthew and with Luke.

Striking as this agreement is, both in the general outline of the whole and in the form of separate narratives, new difficulties are presented by the circumstance that often, in the same passage from which we are led to infer that the Gospels have mutually influenced one another, remarkable differences occur, which indeed frequently amount to actual contradictions. And these variations which appear in the accounts are not confined to the order of the narratives, but affect to quite as great an extent the selection of material also, and peculiarities of representation. Not seldom the three begin as if they were going to give the same account of one and the same event, and they agree in whole sentences of considerable length, connected with one another in the same order; then suddenly they depart from one another, and mutually oppose one another in most important points, only to return again to friendly agreement and even verbal coincidence.

This remarkable agreement of the three first Gospels on the one hand, and their no less startling variations on the other hand, demand some explanation, and for a century scholars have been busily occupied in preparing one key after another to this puzzle. It is now generally agreed that our third Evangelist, at any rate, is the latest, as is clear from his own opening words, and that he collected together the richest material available. The precedence of the first or second, however, is still a matter of dispute. In any case, these Evangelists had somehow a common foundation, and to this they added new material, each one acting with literary freedom. The reader will find the references to parallel passages given in the notes as follows: in Mark, the references to the two other Gospels, in Matthew and Luke to Mark, and in Luke to Matthew as well as Mark.



## 5. MATTHEW.

Matthew (a Hebrew name, the same as Amittai, Jonah i. 1, = German, Treumann [Eng. Trueman]) appears in all the lists of the apostles as the name of one of the twelve disciples, who in Matt. ix. 9 is identified with Levi, who, according to Mark ii. 14 and Luke v. 27, was the fifth in order of calling. Similarly, Peter had previously been called Simon. As Matthew otherwise remains altogether in the background of the history of the apostolic age, there is the more reason to suppose that the early Church must have had some practical ground for assigning the first Gospel to him. And though the later tradition about him is of little or no value, the information of Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, who died about the year 165 A.D., is of considerable importance. He states that Matthew "put together the sayings" in the Hebrew, i.e. Aramaic, language; and as Papias himself, in his "Commentary on the Sayings," deals with the discourses of Jesus, he probably here refers to a collection of his utterances. Now our present "Gospel according to Matthew" must have been originally written in Greek, as is shown by an occasional play of words, and, moreover, it treats of the acts of Jesus as well as his discourses, so that it can scarcely be this that he means. At the same time, it is precisely in the abundance of its reports of the words of Jesus that it departs from the historical lines common to it and Mark. Hence we may reasonably suppose that the ancient Aramaic work to which Papias refers, the only written legacy of one of the twelve apostles, has been incorporated in our far more comprehensive Gospel according to Matthew, and given to it its title. The original writing, being in a language not generally understood, would afterwards be all the more liable to be lost. In many other respects, also, the work we are considering gives an impression of great antiquity, and only a few indications, such as the burning of Jerusalem (xxii. 7), the delay of the return (xxiv. 48, xxv. 5), the three-fold baptismal formula, which is not

found again until the time of Justin (xxviii. 19; compare, on the other hand, the simpler form, Rom. vi. 3; Gal. iii. 27; Acts ii. 38, viii. 16, x. 48, xix. 5), could make us object to the wide-spread opinion that it was written before the fall of Jerusalem. In fact, the existence of the "city of the Great King" (v. 35), with all the magnificence of the temple (xxiii. 16, 17, 21), with sacrifice (v. 23) and altar (xv. 5, xxiii. 18—20), is implied; as also of the priests (viii. 24) and the religious parties (xxii. 23, xxiii. 2, 13 sq.). And the very discourse which deals with the future (xxiv. 4—36) is, as we shall see, unaffected by the great event of the year 70 (the destruction of Jerusalem); there is here no prophecy of any destruction of the city, but only of a desecration (xxiv. 15) and destruction (xxiv. 2) of the temple, and then "immediately" (xxiv. 29) the end of the world.

With this comparatively early date of composition agrees also the fact that this Gospel is intended in the first place for Jewish-Christian circles in Palestine. We see that the Christian community has not broken through the national and religious unity of Judaism, but still remains closely connected with it both inwardly and outwardly, and itself bears distinctly the stamp of the Old-Testament theocracy. And so our Gospel is distinguished from the two others in recording and emphasizing those words of Jesus which show that he confined himself and his operations strictly to Palestine, and within the bounds of Judaism, with its laws and customs (v. 17, 19, vii. 6, x. 5, 6, 23, xv. 24, xxiii. 3, xxiv. 20). And though it is by no means without a corresponding counterpoise of words and deeds that point to the salvation of the whole world, yet in such passages it almost always coincides exactly with one of the others. Only the passages, ii. 11, xxi. 43, xxv. 31—46, xxvii. 24, 25, xxviii. 19, and, it may be, xx. 1—16, xxi. 28—30, have utterances of this kind, which appear to be the special property of the first Gospel. The rejection of the great bulk of the ancient people of the Covenant, and the consequent admission of the heathen into the kingdom of God, are assumed as matters of experience; but the abolition of



the law, which led historically to this result, is condemned plainly enough in the person of the apostle Paul (v. 19). We see throughout an advanced form of Jewish Christianity, which recognizes universal religion, but which must be protected and confirmed in the consciousness of its own right, especially against Judaism itself. Hence no other Gospel presents so many quotations from the Old Testament, adduced to prove the presence of the signs of the Messiah in the life of Jesus; and no other introduces into his life so many traits drawn from the prophets.

At the same time we have in our first Gospel a compilation, the author of which has industriously collected his historical material from the sources which were available to him, and moulded it and rounded it off with an artistic completeness such as we find nowhere else except in the fourth Gospel. No other of the first three adheres so strictly to a regular arrangement of events, or carries out in so orderly a manner its grouping of material in regular cycles. We find ten miracles, seven petitions, seven woes, seven parables, three struggles in the wilderness and in Gethsemane, twice seven members in each of three groups in the genealogy. This peculiarity is rendered especially clear by the manner in which the connection is broken in five places by the insertion of long discourses, at the close of which the Evangelist regularly takes up the thread again with the words, "And it came to pass when Jesus had ended this discourse" (vii. 28, xi. 1, xiii. 53, xix. 1, xxvi. 1). The first of these long compilations (v. 3—vii. 27) is called the "Sermon on the Mount," and is placed first as a sample of the discourses of Jesus. It is followed by a decade of miracles, so selected that there is one example of each class of the miracles to be narrated of Jesus (viii. 1—ix. 34). On the other hand, our Evangelist occasionally avoids the necessity of two narratives of similar events by a peculiar method of condensation: he omits one narrative, and doubles the persons in the other. Thus he omits the healing of the demoniac in Mark i. 21—28 = Luke iv. 31—37, and afterwards introduces him in the company of the Gadarene. There, instead of one, as in Mark

v. 1—20 = Luke viii. 26—39, our Evangelist, viii. 28—34, introduces two demoniacs, to whom he attributes the words, viii. 29, which we find in Mark i. 24 = Luke iv. 34. The case is the same with the two blind men of Jericho, xx. 29—34, in place of Bartimæus, Mark x. 46—52 = Luke xviii. 35—43, after the omission of the blind man of Bethsaida, Mark viii. 22—26. These two blind men appear, for the reason we have mentioned above, as early as Matt. ix. 27—31, the first Evangelist being frequently compelled, in the interest of his own arrangement of material, to disturb and break through the chronological order of events.

## 6. MARK.

The same Papias, whom we have already mentioned several times, further states that Mark, who accompanied Peter as his interpreter, carefully wrote down all that he could remember that related to the Gospel history, from the didactic addresses of his Master. This seemed to him to afford an easy explanation of the circumstance that the order of the narrative in these two Gospels does not agree. For Peter naturally did not give a connected history of the life of Jesus, but only narrated fragments here and there, and these Mark arranged as seemed to him best. It is evident from this remark of Papias, and is, moreover, well established on other grounds, that the "Gospel according to Matthew" early took precedence of all others, so that the ecclesiastical writers formed their conception of the order of the Gospel narrative from it, and adjusted their ideas of that order by it. This account, however, so far as it connects Mark with Peter, is unassailable, for the apostle was an intimate friend at the house of Mark's mother (Acts xii. 12). Mark seems to have been born in Jerusalem, and to have been first cousin to Barnabas, who owned some property there (Acts iv. 36, 37; Col. iv. 10). It was through Barnabas that he became for a time the companion of Paul on his travels (Acts xii. 35, xiii. 5, xv. 37—39). It was probably subsequently to this that he became a disciple of Peter,



and thus obtained the title, which uniformly adheres to him in Christian tradition, of "interpreter" of this apostle, and the name of "son" in 1 Peter v. 13. Afterwards we meet with him in Rome, reconciled again with Paul (Col. iv. 10; Philem. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 11). When ecclesiastical tradition had once assigned the termination of Peter's life to Rome, it was only a natural step to suppose that the Gospel named after Mark was likewise written in Rome, very possibly under the eyes of Peter. And the Fathers agree more and more uniformly in representing this as actually the case.

In point of fact, there is no reason why we should not suppose that this Gospel was composed "according to Mark," in precisely the same manner as the first was written "according to Matthew." In such passages as v. 37, 40—43, viii. 29—33, ix. 5, 6, x. 28, xiv. 13, 29—31, 66—72, the historical narrative may naturally be supposed to be derived from information given by Peter; in xi. 21, xiii. 3, xvi. 7, the name of this apostle is specially brought to the front; and in i. 36 the company of disciples is spoken of as "Simon and they that were with him." The names Simon and Peter are carefully distinguished, and it is in mentioning this very change of name (iii. 16) that Justin expressly refers to certain "Memorials of Peter" as his authority. The apostle's confession of Christ, too, only appears in its full meaning, as a kind of first fruits, in this Gospel (viii. 29); while Matt. xvi. 16 has no special force after xiv. 33. The mists of mythological narrative divide for the first time in the calling of Peter (i. 16 sq.) and the healing of his mother-in-law (i. 30 sq.). From this time the house of Peter is the starting-point for the movements and journeys of Jesus which are described in the course of the Gospel, and indeed for the whole of the Galilean ministry.

At the present day, a considerable number of students maintain that they find the Galilean ministry described in the second Gospel with, comparatively speaking, the greatest historical faithfulness and natural sequence of the individual connecting links of the narrative. And they proceed to treat this Gospel

as the common basis of the first and third. And, in fact, with the exception of about thirty verses which are lost in the general arrangement, the whole of the substance of this book written "according to Mark" may be found in the other two. It frequently happens, indeed, that first one and then the other departs from the order found in Mark, with which on the whole they agree. But the reason of this is found in the circumstances explained in the case of Luke in the notes on iv. 16—30, and in the case of Matthew on pp. 43 sq. In Mark we have, as it were, a wood, in which stand a number of different trees in natural disorder. The arrangement which we find in Matthew is like that of a nursery-garden, where the same plants stand in orderly rows carefully planned and measured out.

And, finally, tradition may not have been wrong in assigning the composition of the second Gospel to Rome, as it has done ever since about the year 200 A.D. Many Latin expressions, and not a few minor characteristics in which this Gospel departs from the common lines, are easily explained on this assumption; and the additions made by the writer to the text which is common to the three, are all made with a view to the universal religion, in opposition to Judaism (ii. 27, xii. 33, xiii. 10). The customs of the latter are here explained (vii. 3, 4), and those of heathenism expressly taken into consideration (x. 12). Soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, the centre of Christian development was transferred to Rome; and, in spite of its other signs of high antiquity, our Gospel seems to be posterior to that event, for in xiii. 24 we read more vaguely that the present age of the world will terminate "in those days, after that tribulation" (i.e. the great famine in Palestine), not, as in Matt. xxiv. 29, "immediately;" and again, in ix. 1, that certain contemporaries of Jesus shall not die "until they see the kingdom of God come with power," not, as in Matt. xvi. 28, "until they see the Son of Man come in his kingdom." Thus the writer already sees further into the future, and from the position which he occupies he looks beyond the mountains, behind which the first Evangelist saw the sunset



glow, and sees new hills and vales, which spread far and wide before him.

### 7. LUKE.

In ecclesiastical antiquities, the name Lucas (Luke), contracted from Lucanus, denotes the original author of the third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. It was through the careful investigation of the latter work that it was first perceived that the composer of both works in their present form only wrote, like the others whom we have mentioned, "according to Luke," and especially according to the journal of his travels, which is partially incorporated in the Acts of the Apostles. According to this account, Luke joined Paul in Troas on his second missionary journey (Acts xvi. 16), and accompanied him to Philippi (xvi. 12 sqq.), where he again attached himself to him on his return from his third missionary journey (xx. 4), in order to travel with him to Cæsarea (xxi. 7, 8) and Jerusalem (xxi. 15). As he again sets out from Cæsarea with Paul two years afterwards (xxvii. 1, 2), it would seem that he spent a considerable time in Palestine; and as Philip the Evangelist resided permanently at Cæsarea (Acts viii. 40, xxi. 8), Luke was in a position to collect historical traditions from him and others, so that many things peculiar to the third Gospel may easily have been really preserved from information received from him. Having come with the apostle Paul, now a prisoner, to Rome (Acts xxviii. 16), he continues to appear in his presence (Philem. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 11), and is honourably designated by the apostle himself as "the beloved physician" (Col. iv. 14). At the same time (Col. iv. 11) we also learn that he was a Gentile by birth, as was also probably the writer of the two books dedicated (Luke i. 3; Acts i. 1) to a certain Theophilus, otherwise unknown to us. These books must have been written at a time when Luke, who probably with Paul fell a victim to the Neronian persecution in 64, was no longer living. The complete destruction of Jerusalem is before the eyes of our Evangelist; and in Josephus' History of the Jewish War, written about the year 75, may be

read a full description of the long and ingenious siege, the entrenchments, the famine, the massacre, the captivity of the people, and the razing of the city and the temple, which are alluded to in Luke xix. 43, 44, xxi. 20, 24. In this Gospel we find an indefinitely long period, "when Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles" (xxi. 24), intervening between the fall of Jerusalem and the return of the Messiah, which is postponed to the distant future (xix. 11, 12, xxi. 12). And the literary activity of the latest of the three Evangelists falls in these "times of the Gentiles," at the earliest towards the end of the first century of our era. He speaks of himself, indeed, as the successor of "many," and as an inquirer and collector (i. 1—3). In the latter capacity he has not refused to accept a whole series of sayings, which are more in consonance with a one-sided Jewish Christianity than with that of Paul, inasmuch as they recommend the practice of formal piety, teach the eternal significance of the law, and condemn riches and approve of poverty in and by themselves without any reservation. The story of the Infancy has also a Jewish colouring. The third Evangelist, like the first, begins with such a narrative in order to give his readers "all things from the beginning" (i. 3). He then gives an account of the Galilean ministry (iii. 1—ix. 50), which for the most part harmonizes with that of the second Gospel. But before proceeding to the departure for Jerusalem, he inserts, in the form of a narrative of the journey (ix. 51, xiii. 22, xvii. 11), a section compiled from the Collection of Sayings and other sources. This passage is the "greater insertion" (ix. 51—viii. 14); there is a "shorter" earlier in the book (vii. 11—viii. 3).

Although it rests thus in many parts on earlier written accounts, the Gospel according to Luke preserves on the whole the independence of its conception of Christianity, especially as regards the relation of Old and New Testament. In Luke's account of his journey, Jesus is represented, in contradiction to Matt. x. 5, 6, as having frequent intercourse with Samaritans, and more than once Jewish unbelief is rebuked by their susceptibility



(ix. 52 sqq., x. 30 sqq., xvii. 12 sqq.). This alone is a sign of the new key which this work strikes. More frequent or marked declarations against the exclusive right of the Jews to the kingdom of God are not to be found in any of the older Evangelists. The form of the account of the first public appearance of Jesus at Nazareth (iv. 16—30), placed deliberately at the head of the narrative, overthrows at once all Jewish hopes, and opens to the Gentiles the prospect of their acceptance in the kingdom of God which had been already promised in ii. 32. And many tolerant sayings and references to the calling of the Gentiles are scattered throughout the whole Gospel. Hence also the emphasis laid upon the free grace and mercy of God, and the prominence given to faith and justification, all in the spirit of Paul. The Church, therefore, has at any rate formed a correct estimate of the stamp and general substance of this Gospel in assigning it to a disciple of Paul. There are many things in the account of the appointment of the apostles (x. 7, 8), and of the institution of the Lord's Supper (xxii. 19, 20), which are taken directly from the Pauline Epistles. Further, Paul regards Christ as essentially "the second Adam" (Rom. v. 12 sqq.; 1 Cor. xv. 21 sq., 45 sqq.), and so here the genealogy goes back not to Abraham, the ancestor of the Jewish nation (Matt. i. 1 sq.), but to Adam, the ancestor of the whole human race (iii. 38). Finally, in complete agreement with this, the representation of Christ himself has now come under the influence of that view which culminated in the transformation of the historic Jesus into the pre-historic "Word of God," which at the appointed time had been made flesh (John i. 1 sqq., 14). Hence the omission of incidents, such as that in Mark iii. 21, which are inconsistent with the supernatural birth. Hence also the imaginative development of all miraculous narratives, and in every respect a Christ omniscient and omnipotent, who calls dead men from the coffin, converses with angels, and escapes miraculously from his enemies; a Christ who, on the cross, instead of uttering a bitter cry, commends himself to God with intercession for his enemies, who rises again in tangible bodily form, and finally ascends visibly to heaven.

## COMMENTARY.

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### THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.

#### CHAPTER i.

The two first chapters of Matthew and of Luke are distinguished as the "introductory narrative." We do not find in the two Gospels, however, the same introduction, but two distinct legends of the childhood of Jesus, which are altogether different from one another, and incapable of being reconciled (comp. note on ii. 7)—wreaths which the warm love, overflowing gratitude and reverent devotion of Christendom have twined around the cradle of its Lord. The contemporaries of Jesus, so far as they appear in the Gospels, know nothing of any mystery connected with his birth. Especially the inhabitants of Nazareth (Matt. xiii. 54—57), and Mary herself (Mark iii. 21, 31), have no such idea. Even Paul takes his stand on Gal. iv. 4. Jesus himself, when contending with enemies who blaspheme against him, relies not upon any miraculous entry into the world, but upon the Spirit of God, which makes the greatness of his deeds and their results (Matt. xii. 8). Compare the note on Mark i. 1.

Verse 1. *Book of the generation.* In the Greek translation of the Old Testament this expression signifies "Book of the Family," "Family Register," and accordingly only refers here to vv. 2—17. —*Jesus*: *Jesua* (for which the Greek translation of the Old Testament gives *Jesus*) was the later form of the ancient Hebrew name *Joshua*, and was then as common as our most familiar Christian names.—*Christ*: This word is the Greek translation of *Maschiach* (in Aramaic, *Messias*). This was the name given by the later



Jews to the king who was promised in the sacred writings, especially in the prophetic books, and who was to reign in the period of the glory of the nation which they expected to come, when Israel should rule over all the heathen and impart its religion to the whole world. As Jesus of Nazareth had claimed this title for himself, he was called by his followers "Jesus the Messiah." By degrees this official title acquired the force of a second proper name, and through the usage of the apostle Paul, especially, the double name, "Jesus Christ," as it stands here, became universally current.—*Son of David*: This was the popular name of the Messiah (cf. xii. 23), inasmuch as it was assumed on all hands that he must be a descendant of the royal line (cf. xxii. 42). Consequently the attempt to prove that he was literally a son of David followed naturally from his Messiahship. To produce documentary evidence of such descent in favour of a poor and unknown family in Nazareth, at a time when all the genealogies except those of the priestly caste were in a state of utter confusion and uncertainty, was scarcely possible. The attempt resulted in two different and contradictory accounts (see note on Luke iii. 31), which are in fact equally arbitrary; the one we have here, the other in Luke iii. 23—38. As the object of the writer of the first Gospel is to prove that Jesus is the Messiah of the Jewish nation promised in the Old Testament (see pp. 43 sq.), he only traces the genealogy back to Abraham, to whom the promises of the Messianic blessing were first given (Rom. iv.). Compare p. 50.

3. *Thamar* and the women mentioned in vv. 5, 6, have come into the line of the Messianic genealogy in a more or less abnormal manner (Gen. xxxviii.; Joshua ii.; Ruth iv. 18—22; 2 Sam. xi.; 1 Chron. ii. 4 sq.), and hence the author of the introductory narrative here inserts them as types of Mary.

5. There is nothing in the Old Testament about Rahab having been the mother of Boaz.

8. Really Jehoram (Joram) was the father of Ahaziah, who was the father of Jehoash, who was the father of Amaziah, who finally was the father of Uzziah (Ozias).

11. Really Josiah was the father of Jehoiakim, who was the father of Jeconiah or Jehoiachin.—*His brothers*: The genealogist is probably thinking of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, who is

called a brother of Jeconiah in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10, but was really his uncle (Jer. xxxvii. 1; 2 Kings xxiv. 17).

12. According to Luke iii. 27, Salathiel was the son of Neri. Our author, on the other hand, is in agreement with 1 Chron. iii. 17. In 1 Chron. iii. 19, Zerubbabel is a son of Pedaiah and nephew of Salathiel. On the other hand, in Luke iii. 27, as here, and in agreement with the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Haggai, he is his son.

13. From this point, the names do not occur in the Old Testament. On the other hand, there are other descendants of Zerubbabel mentioned in 1 Chron. iii. 19 sqq.

16. The genealogy establishes the Davidic descent of Jesus on the father's side. It must therefore have been originally intended to be understood that Joseph was the father of Jesus, which is historically accurate (Matt. xiii. 55). Hence it cannot possibly be from the hand of the same writer who immediately afterwards tells us of the conception of Jesus without a father, and tries to conceal the contradiction between this genealogy and the narrative which follows (i. 18 sqq.) by inserting the description of Joseph as "the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus."

17. The love of play upon numbers (see p. 44) leads to the three-fold repetition of twice seven. This is only rendered possible by the omission of the names of four kings (vv. 8, 11). And even then we must reckon Jesus in, as the fourteenth of the third list, and count Jeconiah twice, once as the last member of the second list (11, "about the time of the Babylonian captivity"), and again as the first member of the third list (12, "after the Babylonian captivity").

### Verses 18—25.

The older form of the legend of the birth of Jesus from a virgin. The first Evangelist was the first to commit this to writing, and prefix it to the accounts which he has derived from written sources in which the father, mother, brothers and sisters of Jesus are still spoken of quite naturally and without reservation (xii. 46, xiii. 55, 56).

18. *Espoused* should be "betrothed."

19. On the one hand, Joseph was strongly inclined to the law, "just," sensitive to any offence or scandal (Deut. xxii. 13 sq.);



on the other hand, he could not find it in his heart to disgrace his wife by a written divorce (Deut. xxiv. 1) declaring the cause of the separation. He therefore selected a middle course, and intended to put her away privily, i.e. by a private agreement.

21. An imitation of Gen. xvii. 19 and Judges xiii. 5. The name Jesus signifies "the Lord helps."

22. *Which was spoken of the Lord*: "Which the Lord spoke."

23. From Is. vii. 14. Isaiah does not speak of a virgin, but simply of a young woman. Three ancient Greek translators rightly render the passage so, but the translation which is the oldest and best known, and is the only one used in the New Testament, certainly renders the word "virgin."

25. The oldest manuscripts and translations have simply "until she bore a son." The description of Jesus as the "first" seems to have been introduced here from Luke ii. 7.

## CHAPTER ii.

1. A second portion of the popular legend, which is only preserved by this Evangelist.—*Bethlehem*, between five and six miles south of Jerusalem, as being the home of the family of David, is here spoken of without hesitation as the residence of all the ancestors of Jesus. In Luke (ii. 4), we find quite a different account.—*King Herod*, called the Great in distinction from his sons, a half-bred Jew and an upstart, ruled over Palestine for nearly forty years. But his government, founded upon the ruins of the national throne, maintained by the help and exercised according to the wishes of Rome, was regarded by the Jewish nation as nothing but a foreign tyranny. He died early in April in the year 4 B.C. Hence, according to verse 16, we should have to suppose that Jesus came into the world six or seven years "before the birth of Christ." Luke ii. 2 requires a different date.—*Wise men*: The text has "magi." This name magian, as a term for Asiatic magicians (as in Acts viii. 9, xiii. 6, 8) or astrologers (as here), made its way into the Grecian world from Babylon, the ancient home of astrology.—*From the East*: The oldest Fathers mention Arabia, of which we are of course reminded both by the gifts (ver. 11) and the passage (Is. lx. 6, 7) on which this rests. In later legends, the "wise men" are turned

into the three kings.—*Jerusalem*: The capital of Palestine, and also the residence of the king.

2. The Jewish Messianic hope had been carried to the East by the numerous Jewish inhabitants of Babylonia. This is assumed by the legend, the origin of which must not be sought by laborious astronomical calculations, but is found in the Old Testament, in the passages which speak of a Star out of Jacob, a Sceptre out of Israel (Numb. xxiv. 17), and generally of lights arising for Israel and for the nations (Is. ix. 2, lviii. 8, lx. 1—3). Hence first the star, and then the company of magi watching it. There are many narratives which show how natural such legends of stars were to antiquity, as, for example, the account of the comet which remained in the sky for seven days after the death of Cæsar (*Suetonius*).—*To worship him*: i.e. to do homage in Eastern fashion, with the face to the ground. Similarly magi, who happened to be in Athens at the time of Plato's death, are said to have offered sacrifice to the departed spirit of the superhuman sage (*Seneca*).

3. It is the thought of a new king arising, with a legitimate claim to the throne, and answering to the national expectations, that terrifies Herod.

4. *All the chief-priests and scribes*: By this the writer means the whole high council, the highest court of the Jewish nation (in Greek, Synedrion, from which is made the Hebrew word Sanhedrin). It consisted of "the high-priest" and former high-priests, who, together with the heads of the families from which they were appointed, are called "the chief-priests" in the New Testament; secondly, the "scribes," properly "writers," i.e. the religious teachers; thirdly, the "elders" (not mentioned here), or rather the members selected from among the elders who presided over the several communities. From them the king demands an opinion upon the question, where the Old Testament places the birth of the Messiah. The historical Herod would have been more likely to turn his attention to quieting the Messianic expectations, and was at deadly strife with the scribes. Moreover, it is very doubtful whether any Sanhedrin existed at that time.

5. The passage in Micah v. 1 (cf. also John vii. 42) gave rise to the whole of this introductory narrative. It was well known that Jesus came from Nazareth. But if he was to be the Messiah,



Bethlehem must be proved to have been his birth-place. This is one of the two points of agreement between the introductory narratives of Matthew and Luke which differ in everything else. (The other point is the conception by the Holy Spirit.) But there are two ways in which it might be shown that Jesus, although a Nazarene, was born at Bethlehem. If the parents of Jesus lived originally in Bethlehem, then the question was, what caused them to remove to Nazareth? Our narrative answers, Herod, who like another Pharaoh raged against the second deliverer and lawgiver of the people, as Pharaoh of old against Moses. But he must first have learnt from the astrologers that a child so dangerous to him was born, and where he was born. On the other hand, if the parents of Jesus lived from the first at Nazareth, then it was necessary to transfer them for a time to Bethlehem at the date of the birth of Jesus, as is done in the introductory narrative of Luke (see note on Luke i. 20).

6. The passage is quoted with great freedom. The birth-place of the Messiah must not be "small," as Micah calls Bethlehem; hence we have here, "by no means the least." The Hebrew, again, does not speak of "princes" (in which our Evangelist follows an erroneous punctuation of the Hebrew letters), but of "districts."—*Shall rule* should be "shall pasture," or "feed."

7. *Inquired of them diligently what time, &c.*, i. e. "Asked them exactly when," &c. It is impossible to say why he called them *privily*; and the whole naïve and circumstantial account of a proceeding more like that of a practised police officer than of king Herod is only intelligible as part of the legend. From the detailed account which Josephus, the Jewish historian, gives of the times of Herod, we only learn generally that the Messianic expectations of the people gave the greatest anxiety to the suspicious and persecuting king, who endeavoured to defend his crown against all Israel by fire and sword, rack and massacre.—*Inquired*: It was especially important to him to know how long the star had been seen. It appears from verse 16, that it must have been about two years, and that Jesus was born about two years before the events here related (ver. 16). Hence we cannot place this narrative before Luke ii. 22—40, especially as the child would then, contrary to all the assumptions of our present narrative (see verse 13), have been brought into the royal city, the

very centre of danger. Nor can it be inserted in the "forty days" of Luke ii. 21, 22, as so short a time leaves no room for the flight into Egypt. It is equally inconceivable that our present narrative should belong after Luke ii. 21—40; for, according to Luke ii. 38, Anna had already made known the news to all Jerusalem (contrary to ver. 3), and the magi again would have had to seek the parents of Jesus, not in Bethlehem, but in Nazareth (Luke ii. 39). Consequently the two introductory narratives exclude one another.

9. The star, which had not been seen for some time, suddenly reappears as they set off by night towards Bethlehem, and moves on before them, until it stands at last over the goal of their journey—a physical impossibility, but an idea full of poetic power and beauty.

11. *Gold and frankincense*, from Is. lx. 6; *myrrh* (comp. note on Mark xv. 23), from Ps. xlv. 9: the greatest treasures of the East.

12. The usual machinery in the introductory narrative of the first Gospel; comp. vv. 13, 19, 20, 22.

13. We may compare various narratives of danger and deliverance, during their childhood, of men who are afterwards to become renowned in history. But we should especially notice that the story of the wonderful deliverance of the child Moses in Egypt (Exod. ii. 1—10) has had a direct influence upon the story of the flight of the child Christ into Egypt.

14. *When he arose, &c.*: "And he arose and took," &c.

15. From Hos. xi. 1. The passage refers to the exodus of Israel from Egypt. In Exod. iv. 23, Jer. xxxi. 9, as well as in this passage, Israel, as the chosen people, is called Son of God. So the Messiah, who is personally what the whole people should be, is called "Son of God." This is the oldest meaning of the epithet, and is the sense in which, for example, it is always to be understood in the first Gospel (iii. 17, iv. 3, 6, viii. 29, xiv. 33, xvi. 16, xvii. 5, xxvi. 63, xxvii. 40, 43, 54). It was not till Christianity came into contact with heathenism that a new element entered the conception of a "Son of God," and the idea of Jesus being physically a Son of God became possible (see note on Luke i. 35).

16. *Coasts*: "Borders."—In this verse it becomes still more



plain how Herod is thought of as a second Pharaoh. In both cases the child, on whose life or death all depends, is to be caught, as it were, in a great net with other children, but escapes, while the others perish. The worst of all tyrants, an enemy of God and the people alike, is represented as engaged in a vain struggle with the true king of the people and Son of God. Perhaps the writer had Rev. xii. 4 in his mind. We have no other account whatever of this horrible massacre which would surpass all that Josephus relates of the old king's suspicion and cruelty. The earliest allusion to it is in the fourth century, when a Roman writer (Macrobius) confuses the massacre of the innocents at Bethlehem with Herod's execution of his own sons, of which we have historical evidence.

17. Jeremiah xxxi. 15.

18. Rachel, the tribal-mother, was buried, according to Gen. xxxv. 19, near Bethlehem. Jeremiah, depicting the horror of the last days of the kingdom of Judah, represents Rachel as arising from her grave and weeping in Rama, which lay about as far to the north of Jerusalem as Bethlehem did to the south. Then the lamentation was over the captivity of her children who were led away to Babylon. Now it is over their cruel destruction.

20. Rests on Exod. iv. 19.

21. Similarly imitated from Exod. iv. 20.

22. [*Notwithstanding . . . he turned aside*, should be, "But . . . he went up."]—After Herod's death, the Jewish land was divided among his sons according to his will. Archelaus, who seems to have inherited also the chief part of his father's wickedness, received the royal title, with Judea, Samaria and Idumea. Galilee and Perea fell to Herod Antipas (comp. Luke xxiii. 7), and the northern and eastern parts of the territory to Philip (comp. note on xvi. 13).

23. This migration to Nazareth is only required for the reason mentioned in the note on ver. 5. Nazareth was really Jesus' birth-place (see Matt. xiii. 54, 57, xxi. 11). Hence he is always called "Jesus of Nazareth," and his followers "Nazarenes" (Acts xxiv. 5), which would not have been the case if he had been merely a settler there. Nazareth, or Nazara, is a little town, never mentioned by Josephus, hidden in the great depression of the highland which bounds the plain of Jesreel on the north. A magnificent

view is obtained from the lofty ridge (Luke iv. 29) a few hundred feet above the present rows of houses which rise in terraces one above the other. The passage quoted here from "the prophets" is not to be found in this form anywhere in the Old Testament. The word Nezer, which reminds one of Nazareth and Nazara, means "shoot" or "branch," and is applied by Isaiah (xi. 1) to the theocratic king who is to be expected in the future, who is called a rod or branch of the stem of Jesse (comp. also Is. iv. 2). The Evangelist entirely ignores the historical meaning of the passage, and avails himself solely of the verbal similarity of the names. Possibly, however, he is also thinking of the Nazirites of the Old Testament, who are described in Luke i. 15. Comp. Judges xiii. 5: "Lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a son. . . . The boy shall be a Nasirite from his mother's womb, and he shall begin," &c. The continuation of the same passage has already been referred to (i. 21). Jerome has rendered Nasirites, "Nasirites," and in Epiphanius, Nasarite is used as a parallel form of Nazarite. Hence we see that the confusion of the two words is quite possible.

#### CHAPTER iii.

##### Verses 1—6 = Mark i. 1—6.

1. *In those days*: Imitation of the style of the Old Testament, e.g. Exod. ii. 11. There is an interval of thirty years between this and the preceding chapters.—*John*: Distinguished from other persons of the same name in the Bible by the designation "the Baptist." He was one of those who looked earnestly and with lofty confidence to the future, and fled from the enervating whirl of society to seek release in the solemn stillness of the wilderness. Such was partly the case with the Essenes, a Jewish religious order to which John stands in somewhat the same relation as a hermit of the middle ages to the monks who lived under a common rule and discipline in a monastery. He, too, appears "in the wilderness of Judea," i.e. the steep pastures and gorges of the limestone range on the east towards the Dead Sea where the Essenes congregated. We should further note that the Jewish historian Josephus mentions this man as an important phenomenon of the time.

2. The first Evangelist is the only one who gives the substance of the Baptist's preaching in this shape (= iv. 17 in the mouth



of Jesus, as also in Mark i. 15). But there is no doubt that he demanded repentance, in the widest sense, moral purification and general conversion, and that he required it in preparation for the forthcoming establishment of a kingdom of God.—*The kingdom of heaven*: A favourite expression of the first Evangelist, corresponding to the expression “kingdom of God” in the others. The universal empire of the Messianic period, which was hoped for, bears the latter name because it is one of the main principles of the Old Testament that a divine monarchy is to be established upon earth, in which God himself is to rule by his representative the Messiah. The former name it bears because it is to descend upon earth from heaven, where God has prepared it beforehand, and there to take its place in opposition to the kingdom of the world, which is of infernal origin. Hence it is in any case something to be realized on this side the grave. Comp. Daniel vii. 13, 14, the passage on which Jewish doctrine concerning the kingdom and the Messiah mainly rests.

3. The Old-Testament type of the Baptist was found in Is. xl. 3. The words, “in the wilderness,” which in the original passage are used of preparing a way (a way is to be made for God, who will bring his people home from the Babylonian captivity), were referred to preaching—John preaching in the wilderness.

4. The dress of a prophet: comp. 2 Kings i. 8; Is. xx. 2; Zech. xiii. 4; Matt. vii. 15; Heb. xi. 37. The wilderness of Judea affords the scanty subsistence mentioned in the text.—*Wild honey*: comp. Judges xiv. 8; but it is more probable that this was taken from the trees.

6. Afterwards, John seems to have remained permanently on the lower Jordan, the bed of which forms the boundary of the wilderness of Judea, in order to baptize there. This outward act, consisting in complete immersion, was the symbol and visible expression (indispensable to the Eastern mind) accompanying the inner act of repentance. It was an understood thing, of which no proof was required, that this was followed by the divine “forgiveness of sins” (Mark i. 4). Thus the salvation of the future had already been announced by the prophets under the symbols of washing and cleansing (Is. i. 16, iv. 4; Micah vii. 19; Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 29, 33; Zech. xiii. 1). Hence every one who submitted to the baptism of John confessed, on the one hand, that he was a sinner,

and, on the other hand, pledged himself to lead a new moral life. The Evangelists emphasize the former aspect of John's baptism, Josephus brings the latter into reater prominence.

Verses 7—10 = Luke iii. 7—9.

7. *Pharisees*: The word signifies those who separated themselves. It was used of those "separatists" who diligently impressed upon themselves the peculiar characteristics of Judaism, in distinction not only from those who were not Jews, but also from those of their compatriots who were less strict in their opinions. Hence they were the leaders of the dominant party, which was zealous for the law and exclusively national. They struck the key-note of piety. They were the authorities for the fantastic popular belief. And they themselves sought to gain a reputation by strict submission to the letter of the Old Testament, and a painful observance of the "Traditions of the Elders" (xv. 2), which had been added to it in the course of time.—*Sadducees*: These, on the other hand, took their stand solely upon the Mosaic law, to the exclusion of any respect for tradition, and from this position they attained the insipid faith described in xxii. 23. Their party included the older priestly families, was high in honour and office in Jerusalem, and contrasted with the popular and democratic party of the Pharisees in having an essentially aristocratic and respectable character.—*Wrath*: The divine judgment, which the Baptist regards as necessarily connected with the impending day of God. The popular Jewish opinion was, that judgment was to be executed upon the heathen; but the Baptist winnows the wheat from the chaff even within the chosen people (ver. 12).

8. *Fruits meet for repentance*: i. e. worthy of those who are converted.

9. What was new and a direct preparation for Christianity in the Baptist's appearance was, that he took up a genuine moral position, and thereby broke down the vanity of "the chosen people," which relied upon its descent. The traditional Jewish righteousness is not acceptable to him either as the inheritance of those who are descendants of Abraham and circumcised Israelites, or as the acquisition of formal Pharisaic observances.

10. *And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees*: "And already the axe is laid at the root of the trees."



11 = Mark i. 7, 8. *He that cometh after me*: The Messiah considered as the personal representative of God (Mal. iii. 1). A summons to repentance and warning of the impending day of God, and the final proclamation issuing from the moral consciousness of Israel itself regarding the necessity of new creative power, are the two component parts of the preaching of John.—*Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear*: Slaves carry their masters' sandals after them, or loosen them from their feet. The latter expression is used in Mark i. 7 = Luke iii. 16. In contrast to his harbinger who warns with words and absolves symbolically, he who is to come will judge with the power of the Spirit. The approved he will endow with the Holy Spirit, of which the water of baptism was but the symbol; the condemned he will consume with the fire of wrath (comp. ver. 12).

12 = Luke iii. 17. *Fan*: "winnowing shovel." When the husbandman on the threshing-floor tosses into the air with the winnowing shovel the corn which he has threshed out, many heavy grains fall near him, and he gathers them up with care; but there is more chaff and straw that is blown away by the wind. The straw and empty ears served for fuel.

Verses 13—17 = Mark i. 9—11.

A tradition corresponding to the narrative of the birth of Jesus is inserted in vv. 14, 15, in answer to the question, which from the point of view of that narrative is imperative, How could the Son of God submit to be baptized and cleansed at the hands of a sinful man?

15. *All righteousness*: i.e. every divine ordinance. The baptism pointed out by the prophets and required by the Baptist appears as such (comp. xvii. 27).

16. A description of a vision of Jesus, who, ripe for the belief in his own destiny, solemnizes the hour of his decision (comp. Ezek. i. 1). Hence the oldest tradition, both within and without the New Testament, takes the baptism as the date and spring of the Messianic consciousness, when Jesus is endowed with the Spirit of God by which he is henceforth led (comp. iv. 1). The later introductory narratives carry this peculiar relation of Jesus to the Spirit of God back to the very beginning, and represent him as begotten by the Spirit. But even in the form of the

dove in which the Spirit here appears, we find traces of the artistic development of the narrative of the baptism. To the Jews and Samaritans the dove was the favourite bird of God and man, the bird of sacrifice, the messenger of peace to Noah, the type of brooding nature, and the symbol of the Holy Spirit. The Rabbis (Jewish theologians) conceived of the Spirit of God moving over the face of the waters (Gen. i. 2) in the form of a dove.

17. To the miracle of the inner vision corresponds a miracle of the inner hearing. Our Evangelist, however, transforms it from an address to Jesus himself (Mark i. 11 = Luke iii. 22) into a divine declaration of his Messiahship, removes it from the sphere of the inner consciousness of Jesus, and enlightens John as to his nature and character, which is quite unnecessary after what has preceded in verse 14. The divine utterance itself is taken from Is. xlii. 1 and Ps. ii. 7. But the recognition of the Messiahship of Jesus by John at this point becomes impossible when we consider Matt. xi. 3, and in view of the general fact that Jesus did not make himself known as the Messiah till a much later period of his life (see note on xvi. 17).

#### CHAPTER iv.

Verses 1—11 = Luke iv. 1—12.

1. *Of the Spirit*: The same divine guide which had "come upon him" (iii. 16). The temptation appears as one that was deliberately challenged. The divine power and divine sonship which had been imparted were to be proved good at once.—*Into the wilderness*: see note on iii. 1. According to xii. 43, Is. xlii. 21, the wilderness is the abode of the evil spirits, and the chief of them at once undertakes the business of temptation. According to Jewish ideas, which have their influence even as late as 1 John iii. 8, the Messiah must overcome the devil. The special expectation of the Christians was, that whereas the Messiah had been put to death by the devil on his first appearance (Luke xxii. 3; John xiii. 2, 27), he would utterly destroy him at his second coming (2 Thess. ii. 3 sqq.; Rev. xix. 19, 20, xx. 2, 10). What is then to happen as an external reality, the legend represents him as now morally accomplishing. The human life of Jesus brought with it struggles and temptations of the bitterest kind, which were all triumphantly overcome (xvi. 23, xxii. 18, xxvi. 37—42; Luke



xviii. 19, xxii. 28). But in our present narrative, which is of a mythical character throughout, they are all concentrated upon a single point, which, as in the Greek myth of The Choice of Hercules, can only mark the outset of the life to which he is called. The Old-Testament type is the people of Israel, which God tempted forty years long in the wilderness (Deut. viii. 2), in order to try its heart as a figure of the temptation to come (1 Cor. x. 6, 11). Israel, indeed, did not withstand the temptation, but the Messiah withstands it.

2. Old-Testament types are partly Moses (Exod. xxxiv. 28) and Elijah (1 Kings xix. 8), partly the people who murmured because of their hunger in the desert (Exod. xvi. 2 sqq.).

3. *The tempter*: Satan is so called after Job i. 6—12, ii. 1—7; 1 Chron. xxi. 1.—*If thou be the Son of God*: In imitation of the type of the serpent (Gen. iii. 1), he calls in question the words which God has uttered (iii. 17).

4. Jesus quotes Deut. viii. 3, according to which God's creative word makes all things for the sustenance of man, and has always means to assist him. The gift of miracles is not to be expended in satisfying mere material wants. On the historical place of such temptations, see notes to xiv. 21, xvi. 9, 10.

5. *The holy city*: so Jerusalem is called in the first Gospel (see xxvii. 53, and note on v. 35). *A pinnacle*: "the battlement." One of those places on the edge of the temple mountain must be meant, from which one looks straight down the precipice below.

6. The devil also quotes Scripture (Ps. xci. 11, 12). The temptation thus assumes the character of a theological contest similar to those between Simon Peter and Simon Magus depicted in the Clementine romance.

7. According to 1 Cor. x. 9 (= Exod. xvii. 1 sqq.; Numb. xxi. 4 sqq.), the Israelites tempted God in the wilderness; i.e. they challenged Him to manifest His power. Hence the quotation from Deut. vi. 16. The historical place of this refusal to make a display of miraculous powers is in xii. 39, xvi. 4.

8. The kingdoms of the world are regarded as the property of the devil, as is stated still more clearly in Luke iv. 6. Hence "the prince of this world," John xii. 31. Comp. note on xvi. 13.

9. According to 1 Cor. x. 7 (Exod. xxxii. 6), the people were also tempted to apostacy and idolatry in the wilderness.

10. *Get thee hence, Satan*: The historical position of these words is xvi. 23. The quotation is from Deut. vi. 13. Renunciation of all means of obtaining power which are earthly and opposed to the divine will.

11. Here again Elijah, to whom, according to 1 Kings xix. 5, angels brought food in the wilderness, is the Old-Testament type. The people, too, had “angels’ food” to eat (Ps. lxxviii. 25) in the wilderness.

12 = Mark i. 14.—*That John was cast into prison*: further particulars of this are given in xiv. 3, 4.

#### Verses 13—16. Only in Matt.

13. The change of residence from Nazareth to Capernaum is intentionally introduced in opposition to Mark i. 14—21.—*His own city* (ix. 1), Capernaum (= Village of Nahum), was at that time a busy and flourishing town, situated on the great commercial road from Ptolemais to Damascus (“the way of the sea,” comp. Is. ix. 1), by the Sea of Gennesaret. It has now completely disappeared, and the whole neighbourhood of the lake has lost much of the beauty and charm which it then possessed.—*In the borders of Zebulon and Nephthalim*: The old tribal divisions had long been abolished. The district is thus described on account of the quotation which is to follow in verse 15.

14. According to John vii. 52, “out of Galilee cometh no prophet,” and the Messiah especially, according to Matt. ii. 5, must be from Judea. Hence our Evangelist endeavours to prove from Isaiah, that the land by the Sea of Galilee (i.e. the Lake of Gennesaret or Tiberias) was first to see the Messianic light.

15. A free rendering of Is. ix. 1 (viii. 23). The territory of the tribes Zebulon and Naphthali lay on the Jordan and by the lake.—*The way of the sea*: comp. note to verse 13.—*Beyond Jordan*: equivalent to Peræa, the land east of the Jordan, opposite to Capernaum, also the scene of the labours of Jesus.—*Galilee of the Gentiles*: The most northern part of Palestine, having a considerable Gentile population, and bordering upon heathen lands, was called “the district of the Gentiles” (Gelil-haggojim, whence the name Galilee).

16. From Is. ix. 2 (1). Comp. note on Luke i. 79, ii. 8.

17 = Mark i. 14, 15. Compare note on iii. 2. Any adult



Jew might come forward in this way as a teacher. Competition in this was absolutely free.

Verses 18—20 = Mark i. 16—20.

The first-fruits of the disciples. A wide-spread influence requires, in the first place, a narrower circle of disciples. In this Jesus followed the example of other teachers of his time, and, above all, the example of the prophets. Old-Testament types in 1 Kings xix. 19—21. Fishing, from which Jesus calls the two brothers, and agriculture (see Luke ix. 62) were the chief occupations in that part of the country. For the Old-Testament original of "fishers of men," see Jer. xvi. 16. On Peter, see note on Mark iii. 16.

Verses 23—25 = Mark iii. 10—12.

A summary of the labours of Jesus in teaching and healing, as a kind of superscription to chapters v.—vii. (an example of his teaching), and viii. ix. (examples of miracles).

**23. *Healing*:** The occurrence of such healings is regarded by the apostle Paul as a marvellous gift laid in the cradle of the Christian community (1 Cor. xii. 9, 29), and he was even conscious of having performed some himself (2 Cor. xii. 12). The Old Testament indicated the time of the Messiah as a period of most perfect health and universal welfare (Is. xxix. 18, 19, xlii. 7). Jesus himself recognized in such descriptions the symbolic representation of his career; hence Is. xxxv. 5, 6 = Matt. xi. 5, and Is. xli. 1 = Luke iv. 18—21. Comp. pp. 37 sq.

**24. *Those who were possessed*:** Whatever these may have been, they are a part of the historical basis of the whole miraculous element of the New Testament. The "unclean spirits," or "devils" (demons), had their home in the Persian religion; but after the Babylonian captivity they spread into Judea, and were especially active there under the Roman empire, which they were supposed to assist vigorously and effectively. All idolatry was supposed to originate with them (1 Cor. x. 20). Having their home in the dark air (Eph. ii. 2, vi. 12) and in desert places (see note on ver. 1), they have a natural impulse to attack men and make their dwellings in them, thereby destroying them with the greatest tortures (Matt. xii. 43—45). Hence possession became the popular expression for insanity. And while Satan is the cause

of every disease (Luke xiii. 16), every one whose mind is affected is especially regarded as a sacrifice to some dark power which renders him strange and unintelligible to himself and his fellow-men. Sudden dumbness and deafness too, but above all delirium, epilepsy, and all kinds of convulsions and sudden seizures, were regarded as the work of demons. This was the explanation of the peculiarly mysterious nature of such diseases. The sufferers themselves were as convinced of this possession as the beholders, and hence in the New Testament they usually speak in the name of the spirit or spirits by which they are tormented (comp. Mark iii. 11). Disease of this kind must have been especially common at that period in the East, and there were exorcists everywhere, and not least among the Jews (Matt. xii. 27; Acts xix. 13), who were the lunacy physicians of the time. It may be proved not only from Mark ix. 38, but also from Jewish sources, that the name of Jesus was regarded as an excellent means for the expulsion of devils. Hence it would seem that the public life of Jesus manifested startling results in the sphere of the healing of troubled souls, as even the contemporary Pharisees acknowledged (xii. 24). —*Lunatic*: These occur only in the first Gospel (comp. xvii. 15). They are epileptics, whose fits were supposed to depend upon the changes of the moon.—*Those that had the palsy*: i.e. such as had lost the use of their limbs by palsy or paralysis. The words of Is. xxxv. 3, pointed to a beneficent influence on such as these: "Strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees!" It is a disputed question whether the healing influence of Jesus was confined to the sphere of spiritual and moral disease. At any rate, the details of cases in which he went beyond it cannot be recognized, and if he did so at all, the necessity of such a course is to be found quite as much in his overpowering compassion, accompanied by a faith capable of removing mountains, and allowing no limits to be set before it, as in the expectation of the people who insisted upon finding in religion a cure for all ills, and in the Messiah a man at least equal to Moses and the prophets if they were to believe in him; while conversely only those who believe can be helped, and Jesus' power of working miracles fails as soon as ever this condition is withdrawn (Mark vi. 5). The Evangelists represent this power as flowing from him wherever sick persons press to him, fall down before him, touch



his garments, beseech his pity, express their faith that help can be given them, so that the Saviour's sense of power is excited and he is roused to exert it.

25. *Decapolis*: a confederation of ten cities, chiefly inhabited by Gentiles, and most of them situated east of the Jordan and south-east of the lake. This great concourse of people has no historical place till after the first beginnings of Jesus' work and influence were already past. Comp. note on Mark iii. 8.

## CHAPTER v.

### Verses 1, 2.

Introduction to what is commonly called the Sermon on the Mount (comp. p. 44), which brings together in this form a number of Jesus' sayings of various kinds, not a few of which re-appear in the first Gospel itself. It is given as a kind of opening address to the people and the disciples. The Mount is from Mark iii. 13. Luke (vi. 20—49) gives this collection of sayings differently.

### Verses 3—12: The Beatitudes.

Instead of the four beatitudes in Luke vi. 20—23, we find nine, or, according to the usual reckoning, seven (vv. 10—12 would then form the transition to the ordinary discourse), or eight, the double of Luke's number (in which case 11 is reckoned as a repetition of 10).

3. *Poor in spirit*: So we read of those who are "contrite and humble in spirit," Is. lvii. 15; Prov. xvi. 19, xxix. 23. Having a feeling of poverty within.

5. *They shall inherit the earth*: This expression is very frequently used in the Old Testament of the occupation of the land of Canaan by the people of the covenant (e.g. Gen. xv. 7; Deut. iv. 1. [A.V. has "possess" in the second passage, but the Heb. is the same in both.]). This promise, as denoting generally the sum of all divine blessing, is then extended to individual pious persons, e.g. Ps. xxv. 13, xxxvii. 9, 11.

### Verses 13—16.

Province of the disciples as the light and salt of the earth.

13. *Salted*: In order that it may in its turn gain new power of seasoning.

[15. "Neither do men light a lamp and put it under the bushel, but on the lampstand."]

### Verses 17—20.

Fundamental principle of the Christian position with regard to the law; the all-important question from the point of view of the first Evangelist.

17. *To fulfil*: not "to fill out" or "complete," but to teach and do what the law requires, and to enjoin it upon others, until all is done and all has come to pass which ought to be done and is to come to pass.

18. *One jot*: "one yod" (י) a Hebrew letter. *One tittle* should be "one penstroke."—If the very letter of the law, according to this passage, is to retain its authority, extending to the final fulfilment of all its provisions as long as heaven and earth exist, then certainly the discourses and proceedings narrated in Mark ii. 19—22, 27, 28, vii. 1—23, x. 2—9, xii. 28—34, do not harmonize with this, inasmuch as these passages distinguish between great and small commands, and indeed depart entirely from the legal standpoint.

19. *The least*: as in 1 Cor. xv. 9: "I am the least of the apostles" (comp. p. 43 *ad fin.*).

### Verses 21—48.

Twice three examples of the true fulfilment of the law, in opposition to the Pharisaic treatment of the law.

21. Exod. xx. 13; Levit. xxiv. 17; Deut. v. 17.—*By them*: "to them."—The clause added by the scribes brings the crime to judgment in the spirit of the law.

22. A double climax. First, in the advance from the feeling of anger in the heart to an outburst in words, in which again a distinction is made between *Racha* (i.e. "thou vain fellow," James ii. 20) and *thou fool* (i.e. according to Ps. xiv. 1, 1 Sam. xxv. 25, "thou infidel," "godless man;"; secondly, in the advance from the simple lower court in the Israelitish provincial towns to the high court at Jerusalem, which can pass sentence of death; finally, to the fire of hell, from which there is no release.—The words *without a cause* should be omitted; they are not in the oldest MSS.

23. Comp. ix. 13, xii. 27.



25. *Agree*: lit. "be well disposed towards, or favourable to," i.e. inclined to satisfy him by paying the debt in question.

26. *Farthing*: Quadrans, or fourth part of an as, divided into two lepta or mites, which occur Mark xii. 42, Luke xii. 59.

27. Exod. xx. 14; Levit. xx. 10.—*By them of old time*: "to them of old time."

28. Exod. xx. 17; Job xxxi. 1.

29. *Offend*: i.e. cause to fall, or at least entice to evil.—*Pluck it out*: A powerful figure, denoting the inexorability of war to the knife.

31. Deut. xxiv. 1. The scribes in the time of Jesus interpreted this provision of the law, which expressly assumes "some shameful thing" on the part of the wife, in such a manner as to leave free scope for any light conduct, so long only as the letter of divorcement (see note on i. 19) was given.

32. *Causeth her to commit adultery*: i.e. if she marry again. The very object of the written divorce was to allow her to marry again.

33. Combination of Levit. xix. 12 with Numb. xxx. 3 and Deut. xxxiii. 23.—*By them*: "to them."

### Verses 34—36.

Further explained by xxiii. 16—22. Basis of this in the Old Testament, Is. lxvi. 1. Every higher thing to which a man appeals on his oath, in order to make others trust his word, carries us back finally to God himself, whose name shall not be taken thoughtlessly.

35. *Of the great King*: i.e. "of God," Ps. xlviii. 2, xcv. 4. Hence "the holy city," Matt. iv. 5, xxvii. 53.

37. Plain, simple truthfulness in our intercourse with one another.

38. The right of retaliation (*jus talionis*) is the foundation of the Mosaic law: Exod. xxi. 24; Levit. xxiv. 50; Deut. xix. 21.

39. *Evil* should be "the wicked man," i.e. any one who does you an injury.

40. *Coat and cloke*: something the same as tunic and toga.

41. *Compel thee to go*: i.e. require thee to conduct him on his journey, a right possessed by the government officials (comp. xxvii. 32). Jesus regards it as an injustice; but so far from

offering resistance to it, the Christian ought to shame those who insist on it by giving more than is required. They must not retaliate, but outdo evil with good.

43. Only the first half of this saying is expressed in Levit. xix. 18, and that on the assumption of course that the conception of neighbour is limited by the national frontier. The scribes therefore supplemented it by the proposition which appears to be sanctioned by the position of the Old Testament with regard to Moab, Ammon, Edom, &c., that one might, and indeed must, hate the Gentile as an enemy of God. Hence heathen writers accuse the Jews of "hatred of the human race."

45. *That ye may be the children*, should be, "that ye may become sons." Here we have the application which was given in the mind of Jesus to the idea of the divine sonship. Elsewhere the idea was limited to the Jewish Messianic sense (ii. 15), or at a later date affected by Greek notions (see note on Luke i. 35). Finally, he only finds it realized in himself (see note on xi. 27).

46. *Publicans*: Tax-gatherers, some of them Romans and some natives, who were either in the service of Roman farmers of taxes as sub-farmers, or else (as seems to have been the case in Palestine at that time) were appointed directly by the government. They were detested both on account of their unpatriotic occupation, and also because of the various unjust and oppressive means which they employed in order to obtain what was due to them.

## CHAPTER vi.

### Verses vi. 1—vii. 12.

The second part of the Sermon on the Mount, consisting first (1—18) of a criticism of the three favourite ways of expressing the Pharisaic piety which prevailed at the time, viz. alms, prayer, fasting.

1. *Alms*: The reading "Righteousness" is probably the correct one; but in what follows, this is at once especially applied to benevolence; and, moreover, in ten passages the Greek translation of the Old Testament renders the Hebrew word for "righteousness" by "alms," and the latter is called "righteousness" in the Jewish Talmud. So also Tobit xii. 9, xiv. 11.



2. *Sound a trumpet before thee*: To be taken figuratively, as we talk of "trumpeting anything forth."

### Verses 9—13.

The "Lord's Prayer" (Paternoster) has here either six petitions or seven, according as we regard verse 13 as containing two petitions or the two aspects of a single one. Luke xi. 2—4 has five petitions, corresponding to the number of the fingers. The name of Father, to be explained by the relation between God and man required by v. 48, is only occasionally touched upon, as it were, by the Old Testament (Is. lxiii. 16; Ps. ciii. 13; Wisdom xxiii. 1), but it became with Jesus the intensely significant and defining name of God. The three first petitions have their source in the comprehensive rights of God, whom heaven and earth must serve. In the third petition the prayer descends from heaven to earth, there to deal with the wants, the limits and the restrictions of human life.

11. *Daily*: This translation of the Greek word, the exact meaning of which is difficult to define, is at any rate not far from the true meaning. If it were not for verse 34, one might translate "to-morrow's," i.e. sufficient for the coming day. The meaning is probably, "what is required for our subsistence, suited to our life," the sense being that of Prov. xxx. 8.

12. *Forgive*: Probably we should read, "have forgiven" (comp. v. 23, 24).

13. This allows the possibility of being tempted by God (in spite of James i. 13), iv. 1; Job i. 12; Luke xxii. 31; 1 Cor. x. 13. The traditional rendering has many errors here. It has *from evil*, while the original probably refers to "the evil one," i.e. the devil. It also contains the conclusion, *for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. Amen*, which is well known to have been introduced here from being used in the churches. That these words are an interpolation is clear, not only from the fact that they are wanting in all the oldest MSS., but also from the direct connection of verse 14 with what precedes.

16. Fasting, a primeval religious usage of the East, plays a part in the Old Testament as the expression and representation of a self-inflicted curtailment of life. It took the form especially

of penitent mourning, wailing, and tearing of clothes, the use of ashes and hair garments. From the time of the Babylonian captivity it had been regarded, like prayer and almsgiving, as a meritorious act having influence with God, and had been pursued by the Pharisees with the greatest possible display of a miserable appearance.

17. Anointing is a sign of joy. Men go to a feast anointed and washed (see Luke vii. 46).

#### Verses vi. 19—vii. 6.

Three prohibitions directed against earthly care, fault-finding and desecration of holy things.

22. *Thy whole body shall be full of light*: All its members are brought into the clear light, move as if in the light, receive direction and guidance by means of the healthy eye. The origin of the illustration is in Prov. xx. 27, "The breath of man is the candle of the Lord searching all the chambers of the body."

23. What a night, when just that which ought to be light only serves to bury the man in darkness!

24. *Mammon* signifies, in the popular language of the time, "riches," or "treasure," here taken as an idol.

27. *Stature*, should be "time of life." It is length of life not of the body that is spoken of. If it were the latter, a cubit would be an extraordinary addition, whereas here a very small amount is intended.

28. *Lilies*: they grow wild in the East.

30. Dry grass, with the flowers that grew amongst it, was used as fuel for the oven.

#### CHAPTER vii.

6. Dog and swine are of course traditional names for the Gentiles, but also for impure and vulgar-minded men generally (Phil. iii. 2; 2 Pet. ii. 22). Such only desecrate and mock at the divine truth when it is surrendered to them. Comp. xxvi. 63, xxvii. 12, 14.

#### Verses 7—11.

A seventh section, in addition to the two threes, vi. 1—18, vi. 19—vii. 6, essentially a continuation of the address on prayer, vi. 5—15.

12. Final summary of the moral discourse and transition to



the concluding section. The thought is found in Tobit iv. 16, and elsewhere in the older Judaism.

15. "In sheep's clothing:" see note on iii. 4. Transition from the way of life (13, 14) to the guides in it.

22. *Lord, Lord*: The address of Jewish pupils to their teachers. Comp. xxiii. 7—10.

23. The words of dismissal are from Ps. vi. 9, cxix. 115.

28. Concluding note to the Sermon on the Mount.

29. From Mark i. 22 = Luke iv. 32, where the first impression of the public appearance of Jesus is thus described.

#### CHAPTER viii.

The section viii. 1—ix. 34 gives a selection of miracles, as ch. v.—vii. did of discourses. The passage xi. 5 refers to most of the miracles here narrated, and the selection is in some cases determined by it, as for instance the first of the present section.

1. This verse serves to connect what precedes with what follows.

Verses 2—4 = Mark i. 40—45.

2. *A leper*: See the detailed description in Levit. xiii. xiv. of this disease, one of the severest plagues of the East.—*Worshipped him*: should be, "fell down before him." See note on ii. 2.

3. The result here goes beyond those cases of fever, or of persons possessed or lame, in which we can understand the effect of an overpowering will. We are reminded here of 2 Kings v. 9—14; Is. i. 6, xxv. 8, lxi. 1, symbolic of the deliverance of the people who were unclean in their sin and rejected. Hence this legendary exaggeration and confusion of an historical event. The real occurrence was only a declaration of cleanness, which the man, who has already recovered from the disease, asks of Jesus in order that he may be relieved from the necessity of the journey to Jerusalem required by the law. This interpretation of the passage is supported by the reservation (ver. 4) with which Jesus declares him clean, and seals the declaration by touching the man whom hitherto every one had avoided as unclean (ver. 3).

4. *The gift that Moses commanded*: Levit. xiv. 10, 21.—*For a testimony unto them*: in order that people may have a safe ground for considering that there would be no danger in intercourse with him.

Verses 5—13 = Luke vii. 1—10.

5. *A centurion*: i.e. "a captain over a hundred." This was a Gentile or Samaritan, one of the soldiers of Herod Antipas, who had become a Jew (proselyte).

6. *My servant*: The Greek word may mean "boy," "son." Luke represents him as "servant," John as "son" (John iv. 47).

8. As a Gentile, in proximity to whom Jews might easily become unclean.

9. A genuine soldier's illustration: "If I, although obeying higher officers, can still execute my will by means of others who are subject to me, much more canst thou, who art subject to none, bid spirits of disease come and go without troubling thyself to come to the place."

11. An echo of Is. xlv. 6, xlix. 12.

12. *The children of the kingdom*: i.e. those who have the first claim to it, the Jews.—*Into the outer darkness*: outside the brilliant hall where the Messianic wedding is held.

13. The remarks made on ver. 3 apply to this miracle also. In the words of Jesus there is too much genuine uninvented tradition for us to be able to relegate the whole to the sphere of legend. But that there is something legendary in the details is shown by the different accounts in the third and fourth Gospels.

Verses 14, 15 = Mark i. 29—31.

14. Peter was married (1 Cor. ix. 5), and his mother-in-law was living with him. Fevers are common in the damp marshy districts near the lake.

15. Jesus holds out his hand to her in greeting and sympathy. The cure is the involuntary result of his first act.—*And ministered unto them*: "and served them;" she attended to her guests.

16 = Mark i. 32—34.

17. Only in Matt., a quotation from Isaiah liii. 4 to describe the prevailing sentiment of Jesus, compassionate sympathy springing from his intercourse with the suffering of the people. It will not allow him to give a cold refusal to the cry for miraculous help.

18 = Mark iv. 35, which follows here instead of Mark i. 35.

Verses 19—22 = Luke ix. 57—60.

20. *The Son of Man*: Under this epithet, which is founded



upon Dan. vii. 13, 14, and is Jesus' favourite name for himself, he hides for a time his Messianic claims, and at the same time indicates that in his higher consciousness the Jewish Messianic idea extends to the whole human race. Comp. notes on ix. 6; Mark ii. 28.

**22.** *Let the dead bury their dead*: Let dead minds bury dead bodies. From the gloomy, unfruitful service of death in which men waste their time, which was wide-spread enough among the people at that time in Israel (see ix. 23), but was also a fundamental characteristic of the ancient religions generally, Jesus calls them away to the service of the highest life.

Verses **23—27** = Mark iv. 36—31.

**26.** The purely figurative and indeed artistic character of this physical miracle, which passes beyond the limits of all spiritual and moral means, is as plain as that the whole description is a growth, as it were, of which the germ is found in the Old Testament. Comp. Ps. cvi. 9, cvii. 25, 28—30; also Nahum i. 4; Hab. iii. 8; Jonah i. 1—16; Exod. xiv. 16, 21; and finally Ps. cxxi. 4. The first Evangelist alone represents Jesus as first rebuking his disciples and then the storm. The inverse and more natural order is found in the two others.

Verses **28—34** = Mark v. 1—20.

**28.** *Gergesenes*: A reading to which Origen first gave currency in place of "Gerasenes," which was the common reading in his time. But according to Josephus nothing was left at this time of the Gergesenes mentioned in Gen. x. 16, xv. 21; Deut. vii. 1; Jos. xxiv. 11, except the name. Gerasa, again, lies about six times as far south of the lake as Gadara, though Gadara indeed is between two and three leagues inland. Unless the place here intended is a certain Kersa or Gersa on the east shore, which was only re-discovered in 1860, we should probably read with the oldest MSS. "Gadarenes." All three readings are found also in Mark v. 1, Luke viii. 26.—*Out of the tombs*: Many caves are still found in the mountain limestone there which are used as burial-places.

**29.** *Son of God*: see note on ii. 15. Similarly, in Mark i. 24, 34, v. 7, it is the demoniacs who first give this title to Jesus. According to the popular belief of the Jews, the Messiah will

execute judgment upon the evil spirits (see note on iv. 1). Hence they suspect the greatness of Jesus, and are apprehensive as to their own lot; and they flee from him that he may not destroy them "before the time." The description is based upon 1 Cor. xvii. 18.

30. *Swine*: Animals which were hated by the Jews. The inhabitants of the country east of the Jordan were mostly Gentiles. Jewish scorn seems to have a share in the delineation of this miracle. The silly devils, now that they cannot withstand Jesus' entrance and maintain themselves in men, choose as their dwelling beasts unclean as themselves; but they are only drawn into a snare, for they provoke the beasts, which represent the sensuality of the Gentiles, as they had provoked men before, and are driven with them into the water, thence to descend into hell. The passage in Is. lxxv. 4, 5, has also had some influence on this narrative: "Who sit in the tombs, and pass the night in caves; who eat swine's flesh, and their dishes are abominable broth; who say, Stand by thyself, come not too near to me."

33. *Into the city*: see note on ver. 28.

#### CHAPTER ix.

Verses 1—8 = Mark ii. 1—12.

1. This verse (= Mark v. 21) belongs to the preceding passage, which is here brought into connection with Mark ii. 1.

2. Jesus sees through the suffering features and countenance into the suffering soul. The disease was the consequence of sin. Compare with this verse Is. xxxiii. 24.

3. *Blasphemeth*: This is explained by Mark ii. 7.

5. Answer:—Both are equally easy if it is only a matter of "saying," both equally difficult to say with effect. The difference is, that the effect of the word "Arise" is seen immediately.

6. Jesus adds the word of power with which he heals the cripple as a sign that he, as the Son of Man (see note on viii. 20) forgives sins with equal authority and effect.—*On earth*: He forgives on earth as God does in heaven. Hence, Son of Man = "earthly representative of God in the forgiveness of sins."

7. See note on iv. 24.

Verses 9—17 = Mark ii. 13—22.

9. *At the receipt of custom*: Capernaum was one of the towns



where customs were collected, on account of the great high road passing through it (see note on iv. 13).

10. *Sat at meat*: So rendered in accordance with our present custom. In this and all similar passages the original speaks of "lying at meat" [so lit. "came and lay down," in latter part of this verse], according to the universal custom of that time of reclining on cushions at meal-times.

11. The strict adherents of the law among the Jews were especially scrupulous and obstinate in regard to eating and drinking with others. Comp. Gal. ii. 12.

13. The first Evangelist stands alone here and in xii. 7 in his reference to Hosea vi. 6.

14. See note on vi. 16.

15. The first sad foreboding. The question of fasting is left entirely to the decision of the disciples themselves. *Then shall they fast*, "then they will fast."

16. Jesus refuses, as it were, to patch up the old Jewish coat with a new piece of better cloth. The division which had already taken place, and which was fundamental, *the rent*, would only be made worse; just as a patch of new (lit. "unfulled") cloth put on an old garment will not long remain good, but shrinks the first time it gets wet. So this kind of conservative and traditional conduct is altogether suicidal, for which reason Jesus abstains entirely from giving any rule with regard to fasting, and pursues further the line indicated by Isaiah lviii. 3—7.

17. So also, if one tried to keep the new fermenting wine in rotten old skins that would not hold it, it would only be wasted. *Bottles*: "skins." The ancients usually kept their wine in goat-skins. The new reality must create its own forms of life and methods of expression suited to its joyous, enthusiastic spirit.

Verses 18—20 = Mark v. 21—43.

18. *A certain ruler*: Further explained by Mark v. 22 = Luke viii. 41. The Old-Testament foundation of the story is found in the account of Elijah at Sarepta (1 Kings xvii. 17—24) and Elisha at Shunem (2 Kings iv. 17—37).

20. The woman suffering from an issue of blood for twelve years is the image of incurable uncleanness (Levit. xii. 7).—*The hem* should be "the tassel," which was a part of the national costume of the Jews (Numb. xv. 38).

23. *Minstrels*: Flute-players, funeral music.

24. It is a disputed question whether the word "sleepeth" means the girl is really still alive (the Jews were always in a hurry to pronounce any one dead and get him buried), or that this death will prove to be merely temporary like a sleep.

#### Verses 27—31.

These verses are only found in Matt. The event narrated is the same as in xx. 29—34 (see p. 9), introduced here in order to justify beforehand the words which follow in xi. 5, "the blind see." On the healing of blind persons, see notes on xx. 30, Mark viii. 23.

#### Verses 32—34.

To be viewed in the same light as the preceding narrative. The event is the same as in xii. 22—24. It is added here in order to bring the number of healings up to ten, and, through the natural connection of dumbness with deafness (Mark vii. 32), to prepare for the words, "the deaf hear," in ix. 5.

34. *The prince of the devils*: see note on x. 25, a passage which is to be explained by the present one. Hence the fragment does not break off till after this verse.

Verses ix. 35—x. 42 = Mark vi. 6—13 = Luke ix. 1—6, x. 1—12.

35. Repetition of iv. 23 with reference to Mark vi. 6.

36 = Mark vi. 34. The figure is taken from Numb. xxvii. 17; 1 Kings xxii. 17; Jer. iv. 6; Ps. cxix. 176.

### CHAPTER x.

Verses 1—14 = Mark vi. 6—11 = Luke ix. 1—5.

1. This idea that miraculous and spiritual powers are capable of being mysteriously communicated to others, is applied in the book of Acts to the relation between the apostles and their disciples (Acts viii. 15, 17, 19, xix. 6).

Verses 2—4 = Mark iii. 16—19.

2. *Apostles*: i. e. "messengers." Their very number, taken from the number of the twelve tribes of Israel, shows what they are intended for (ver. 6). That the five disciples, all whom Jesus has so far called (iv. 18, 21, ix. 9), have been increased to twelve, is simply assumed in this Gospel. See note on Mark iii. 14.



3. *The publican*: "the tax-gatherer."—*Lebbæus* ("the stout-hearted") is called Thaddæus in Mark iii. 18, and also here according to the received text. On the other hand, in Luke vi. 16, Acts i. 3, John xiv. 22, a certain Judas, son of James, appears in his place. The tradition is uncertain.

4. *Iscaiot*: i.e. "man of Kerioth," a city of the tribe of Judah.

#### Verses 5—42.

A long charge to the apostles, in which the Evangelist includes all that Jesus imparted to those whom he sent forth at various periods of his ministry, and especially in his latter days.

5, 6. Only in Matt. (see p. 43).

5. *Samaritans*: This mixed people, springing from the Israelites who remained behind when the kingdom of the ten tribes was destroyed and the heathen colonists placed there by the Assyrians, was rendered the more utterly hateful to the Jews (see Eccles. iv. 26, 27) by the very fact that the worship on Mount Gerizim, near Sichem, was offered, like their own, to the one God, and was intended to take the place of the worship at Jerusalem (John iv. 20).

6. *Lost sheep*: see note on ix. 36. The first apostolic mission is restricted to Galilee, for it is limited on the south by "the Samaritan cities," and on every other side by "the way of the Gentiles."

8. *Raise the dead*, is wanting in many ancient MSS.—*Freely ye have received, freely give*: "Ye have received gratis, give gratis," practically carried out by Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 18.

9. *Purses*: lit. "girdles," which were so arranged that one could keep money in them.

10. They shall be supplied with the usual provision for a journey wherever they take up their quarters. This is the right of wandering labourers in the kingdom of God. They are to abstain altogether (in contrast to Israel in its wanderings, Exod. xii. 11) from regarding strangers as strangers.

11. Hospitality is to open the way for the spread of the new preaching of the kingdom, the most natural means to this day in the East. And here a long visit is preferred to quick change of quarters (comp. note on Luke x. 7).

12. Great importance is assigned to greetings among Eastern

nations. The most usual formula ("Peace be with you") is found as early as Judges xix. 20; 1 Chron. xii. 18.

13. *Let your peace return to you*: If your wish be unfulfilled, it will return to you, you will be none the poorer. The idea is taken from Is. lv. 11; 1 Kings xxii. 17 (also ix. 36, x. 6, from the passage in 1 Kings).

14. *Shake off the dust of your feet*: as something unclean that you refuse to take with you. Not even the least thing shall be any longer shared with those who will not receive the gospel. Comp. Luke x. 10, 11.

15. See Gen. xviii. xix.

Verses 17—22 = Mark xiii. 9, 11—13.

17. Their lot among the Jews. The officials of the synagogues had a certain amount of judicial power, and were allowed to order thirty-nine stripes for religious offences. Comp. 2 Cor. xi. 24; Acts xxii. 19.

18. Their lot among the Gentiles. A description of the experiences of those who came afterwards, Paul for example.—*Against them*: i.e. the Jews (ver. 17).

23. Only in Matt. Ere the apostles have quite completed their task even in Israel the Messiah will return as the judge of the world, appointed by God. There is no allusion here to Paul.

25. Only in Matt.—*Beelzebub* would be the Fly-god of Acron mentioned 2 Kings i. "Beelzebul," which we ought probably to read, is either simply another pronunciation of the same name, or denotes the Phœnician Sun-god as "Lord of the (heavenly) dwelling." In any case the false deity intended was regarded as the "prince of the devils" mentioned ix. 34.

29. Everything that happens, even the least and most fortuitous, is the work of God.—*Farthing*: the Roman as. See note on v. 26.

34. Contrast to the Messianic times of peace, Mic. iv. 3, v. 4, 5; Zech ix. 9, 10, in accordance with Exod. xxxii. 27; Ezek. vi. 3, xiv. 17, xxi. 12.

35. Founded on Micah vii. 6.

36. Only in Matt.

38. *His cross*: an expression which could scarcely be used of



evil borne in following Jesus until after the time when the way which he himself trod had ended on the cross.

39. The sacrifice of the material life is made the condition of the lasting attainment of life.

41. Only in Matt.—*In the name of a prophet*: With respect to the full meaning of the name “prophet;” as we should say, “in virtue of his office.” The expression is intended to denote the higher motive for receiving him. [Similarly “in the name of a righteous man,” and “in the name of a disciple,” ver. 42.]

#### CHAPTER XI.

1. The charge given to the disciples when they are sent forth is of such supreme importance to the first Evangelist, that their actual dismissal (Mark vi. 12 = Luke ix. 6) disappears beneath a general concluding remark (see p. 44), and in xii. 1 we find the disciples again with Jesus as if nothing had happened.

Verses 2—19 = Luke vii. 18—35.

3. *He that should come*: The man of the future, taken from Ps. cxviii. 26, as a secret designation of the Messiah. Now for the first time the Baptist, roused to glowing expectations by the accounts he hears of Jesus, whom he formerly baptized among many others, begins to think that he may be aiming at a Messianic goal.

5. This utterance, which is compounded from Is. xxix. 18, 19, xxxv. 5, 6, lxi. 1 (comp. Luke iv. 18), and culminates in the blessing conferred upon the poor by the preaching of the gospel to them, can only, like the original passages, be meant figuratively of the spiritual results of his preaching, the healing of moral offences. Hence “the dead are raised up” (as in viii. 22; Luke xv. 24, 32). But our Evangelist has taken it literally, and so has been careful to introduce previously accounts of the restoration of the blind (ix. 27—31), the lame (viii. 5—13, ix. 1—8), lepers (viii. 1—4), the deaf (ix. 32—34), the dead (ix. 18, 19, 23—26), and finally of the preaching of the gospel which Jesus practised himself (ix. 35, xi. 1) and appointed to his disciples (x. 7).

6. While Jesus refers the decision and judgment to the inquirer, at the same time he lifts his hand in warning against any Messianic expectation that could look with contempt upon what

was to him the highest thing of all, the joyful message in the ears of oppressed and yearning souls.

10. The mark of the Baptist, from Mal. iii. 1.

11. Testimony to the powerful impression that the appearance of the Baptist had made upon Jesus himself. But now he feels himself essentially separated from him. His *kingdom of heaven* was different from the kingdom of God, as proclaimed by the last and greatest of the prophets in accordance with his predecessors.

12, 13. Insertion of a remark upon the crisis in the history of the coming kingdom of God, marked by the appearance of the Baptist. Until his time it was but a kingdom of God prophesied in the future ; from his time it has been possible for all to gain and possess it who rouse themselves to the assault and to decisive deeds of valour, such as are described in v. 29, 30, vi. 24, x. 37—39, xviii. 8, 9.

14. Not the actual Elijah, but the Elijah prophesied in Mal. iv. 5 (iii. 23). On the historical place of this saying, see note on xvii. 12.

16. Illustration of the position which the people have taken up in opposition to both the great teachers. They have been like wayward children, quarrelling over their games, whom nothing will satisfy.

17. *We have piped unto you* : Those addressed are the gloomy party of John. You have not accepted our call to a merry wedding-game.—*We have mourned unto you* : The party addressed is the wedding company (ix. 15) of the Messiah. You have not joined us when we chose to play at funeral processions and mourning ceremonies.

18. *Hath a devil* : is possessed, has gone mad.

19. *A friend of publicans and sinners* : comp. ix. 11.—*Is justified* : by the effect which she produces upon her followers.—*Of her children* : whose representative in the present case is Jesus himself.

Verses 20—24 = Luke x. 12—15.

21. *Chorazin* (otherwise unknown) and *Bethsaida* (Mark vi. 45, viii. 22 ; Luke ix. 10 ; John i. 44, xii. 21) were places on the lake, north of Capernaum. See note on xiv. 13.—*Tyre and Sidon* : the well-known great heathen cities on the sea-coast.—*Sackcloth and ashes* : a coarse, loose mourning garment, hanging like a sack



on the body and held together with a cord, and ashes which were sprinkled on the head or spread on the ground to lie in. Comp. Jonah iii. 5, 6, 8; Job xlii. 6.

Verses 25—27 = Luke x. 21, 22.

The precious memory of a sacred hour of sad meditation and triumphant self-confidence.

26. Submission to the fact.

27. *All things*: according to what has preceded, this refers to success and failure, plentiful harvest and scanty. If he win “babes” only, that is God’s doing. With regard to the words which follow, this at any rate is clear, that they express the entirely unique nature of Jesus’ religious position as the exclusive Mediator to humanity of the highest spiritual truths, and that this is based upon the recognition of God as the Father, which was first perfected through him, and upon his recognition through the Father, which is only another aspect of the same thing. But unfortunately the reading which has come down to us is by no means certain. Much art was early brought to bear upon the passage. There is one reading especially which is at least as old as our present one, and in favour of which there is considerable testimony from the middle of the second century downwards: “No man knew the Father save the Son, nor the Son save the Father, and he to whom the Son will reveal it.”—[*Will reveal*, here and in the English version = “is willing to,” and is a correct translation of the ordinary reading.] The endeavour to place the Son in the eternal divine present, seems to have caused the suppression of the past tense of the verb.

Verses 28—30. Only in Matt.

The many, if only faint, echoes of Ecclesiasticus are remarkable (see Eccles. vi. 20, 25, 26, 30, 34, xiv. 21 sqq., li. 1, 10 sqq., 17, 23—27). Such passages also as Is. xiv. 3, xxviii. 12, lv. 1—3; Jer. vi. 16, xxxi. 2, 25; Prov. ii. 1, iv. 20, v. 1, 12, find here their New-Testament revival and highest interpretation. And the passage itself is a most eloquent commentary on Jesus’ own idea of the Messiah in opposition to the popular expectations.

## CHAPTER xii.

Verses 1—8 = Mark ii. 23—28.

1. *Ears*: It must have been about Easter.

2. The act itself was not forbidden (Deut. xxiii. 25), nor is it in the East to this day. The ears are plucked, and the grain rubbed out in the hands and eaten.

3, 4. See 1 Sam. xxi. 1—6. Proof that, when in want (through hunger), one may eat what is forbidden. The shew-bread, which was laid in the holy place of the temple as an offering (Exod. xl. 23), being most holy, might only be eaten by the priests in the holy place (Levit. xxiv. 9). But the high-priest made an exception this time on condition that David and his men were clean. From this, the conclusion is here drawn that David had followers with him (corresponding to the disciples who are here immediately attacked), and that he himself entered the holy place (which would have been a further transgression of the law). Neither of these things is in the Old Testament. A further silent assumption of this argument is, that Jesus, as Messiah, is at least equal in rank to David, his prototype.

5—7. Only in Matt.

5. Apropos of the priests, he finds a second example applying directly to the Sabbath question which is before them, the labour of those who offer the sacrifices on the Sabbath. See Levit. xxiv. 8; Numb. xxviii. 9.

6. *One greater*: should be, "something greater."—The priests receive a dispensation from the observance of the Sabbath, on account of the requirements of the temple which they serve. The Messiah is more than the temple, "the holy one of God" more than "the holy thing." Comp. John ii. 19—21.

7. See note on ix. 13. [*I will have*: i.e. "I desire."]

8. In any case, the Messiah, as supreme Lord of the kingdom of God, has the right of issuing decrees even with regard to the Sabbath.

Verses 9—14 = Mark iii. 1—6.

10. *His hand withered*: like Jeroboam, 1 Kings xiii. 4. The question put here in the mouth of the Pharisees is only suitable in the mouth of Jesus (Mark iii. 4 = Luke vi. 9).

11, 12. Appeal to the conduct of unsophisticated popular life,



as in Luke xiii. 15, xiv. 5, but here introduced quite inconsistently with the general connection.

13. After 1 Kings xiii. 6.

### Verses 15—21. Only in Matt.

These verses contain an account of miraculous healings, which has a certain affinity with Mark iii. 7, 10, 12, but is more general.

18—21. The striking reserve with which he shrinks from publicity, the quiet activity of this Messiah, is to be explained by Is. xlii. 1—4.

21. *Trust* : “hope.”

Verses 22—42 = Mark iii. 20—30 = Luke xi. 14—32.

23. On the occasion of a more remarkable cure of one possessed, the popular voice is for the first time heard to give utterance to the thought that Jesus might be the Messiah. Comp. note on viii. 29.

24 = ix. 34.

27. See note on iv. 24.

31. *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost* : “blasphemy against the Spirit.” They had not vilified him, at whose humble appearance they might take offence, but the holy power of God itself which was evidently working in him.

33—35. Part of this we have already had in vii. 16—20.

34. *Generation* : “brood.”

39. Jesus refuses on principle to work upon an imagination which desires displays of miraculous powers. The gospel narratives, which relate scarcely anything but miracles, or at any rate attach an immense value to them, afford a contrast to this which calls for the most thorough and careful investigation.—*Adulterous* : in the figurative language of the Old Testament, faithless to God (Hosea ii. 1 sqq., 16 sqq.).—*The sign of the prophet Jonas* : see xvi. 4. It consisted, according to Jonah i. 2, iii. 1—4, in the call to repentance.

40. An interpolation, for verse 41 belongs immediately after 39. The explanation is far-fetched, assumes beforehand the resurrection of Jesus, and is altogether unsuitable, inasmuch as the resurrection is represented as having taken place between thirty and forty hours after his death.

41. According to Jonah iii. 5 sqq., the “sign of Jonas” at least produced some fruits.—*A greater than Jonas is here*: “there is more than Jonas here.”

42. See 1 Kings x. 1 sqq.—*A greater than Solomon is here*: “there is more than Solomon here.”

Verses 43—45. See notes on iv. 1—24.

Verses 46—50 = Mark iii. 31—35.

46. *Brethren*: The connection with his mother requires us to understand that they were his own brothers by birth. See note on Luke ii. 7.

### CHAPTER xiii.

Verses 1—34 = Mark iv. 1—34.

3. *Parables*: In the genuine Oriental style of Jesus’ teaching, in which the material always bears the spiritual within it, we never find a thought which his imaginative power cannot depict in vivid colours. And where physical and human life become a mirror for religious comparisons and types, not simply in individual characteristics (“brood of vipers,” “that fox Herod,” &c.), but also in a continuous course (e.g. in the growth of the seed), there the simple “illustration” or “metaphor” is carried out with loving care till it becomes a “parable” proper, such as had already served in the Old Testament to throw light upon the deepest secrets of the kingdom of God and the moral world (Judges ix. 8—15; 2 Sam. xii. 1—4; 2 Kings xiv. 9; Is. v. 1—7, xxviii. 23—29).

10. The form of the question, different from that of the collateral accounts, is made to correspond to the beginning of the answer.

11. This verse might in itself express the opinion, which is at any rate more natural, and lies at the foundation of Mark iv. 33, that Jesus gives the people figures to illustrate his meaning, because they are less apt and capable than the disciples in receiving what is altogether spiritual. But the connection with vv. 14—18 shows us that the first Evangelist takes the same theological view as Mark iv. 11, 12 = Luke viii. 10.

12. In Mark and Luke this verse follows later (Mark iv. 24, 25; Luke viii. 18). In the popular saying, Jesus finds a warning that, as in the market of life, so also in spiritual things, the rich



man grows richer, while the poor man easily becomes utterly destitute,—a warning which might induce Jesus for that very reason to come to the rescue of the wasting capital with his supply of enriching parables. But in the position in which our Evangelist puts the words, they are intended to explain why the receptive disciples, in addition to what they already possess (the parable which they have heard) receive still more (the explanation of it); while for the unreceptive multitude the apparent possession is completely deprived of all value, for though they have heard the parable, they do not understand it at the time, nor even on after-consideration.

13. Accordingly, the reason for speaking in parables is found in the indifference which manifests itself in not seeing and not hearing.

14, 15. Only in Matt. Taken from Is. vi. 9, 10, in the Greek translation. The saying of Isaiah with regard to a merely apparent acceptance of the word is fulfilled by the parable, which produces only an apparent possession.

18. In opposition to the people, the disciples see. They therefore are allowed to hear the explanation of the parable, the solution of the riddle is given to them.

24—30. The elements of the parable are the same as in Mark iv. 26—29, but here it is enriched by the companion illustration of ver. 25, which interrupts the gradual but regular development, and by the thought contained in it of the mingling of good and evil in the temporary appearance of the kingdom of God.

25. *Tares*: the poisonous darnel, which is very like wheat in appearance, but has black grains which have a narcotic influence.

#### Verses 35—53. Only in Matt.

In Mark iv. 3—8, 26—32, we have a collection of three parables taken immediately from the same natural phenomenon (the growth of the seed). By the addition of these four, Matthew brings the number up to seven.

35. From Ps. lxxviii. 2.

42. *There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth*: This was quite in place in viii. 12 = Luke xiii. 28, where they were thrust out of the brilliant hall into the cold, dark night. The first Evangelist, however, brings it forward on several other occasions, and

even in unsuitable places, as here and in ver. 50, where fiery torment is spoken of, not cold and darkness. [Unsuitable if we take Luther's version in the sense of "chattering of teeth." "Gnashing" or "grinding" is the correct translation.]

43. Imitated from Daniel xii. 3, "And the teachers [A.V. "They that be wise"] shall shine as the brightness of the firmament."

44—46. Illustrations of the inestimable value of the kingdom of heaven.

Verses 54—58 = Mark vi. 1—6.

54. *His own country* should be "his own city."

55. *Joses*: Some of the MSS. call him Joseph, which was also the father's name.

57. *In his own country* should be "in his own city."

#### CHAPTER xiv.

Verses 1, 2 = Mark iv. 14—16.

2. *Therefore*: i.e. in accordance with his wonderful re-appearance. The historical Baptist had performed no miracles (John x. 41).

Verses 3—12 = Mark vi. 17—29.

3. *For Herodias' sake* ("on account of Herodias"), *his brother Philip's wife*: An unhistorical account. Herodias was the wife of another brother of Antipas. It was her daughter Salome who was Philip's wife. See note on ii. 22.

4. No doubt Antipas, who was married to a daughter of Aretas (2 Cor. xi. 32), king of Arabia, entered into an unlawful connection with Herodias, and it led to a marriage which was doubly to be condemned, on the one hand as being unfaithful to the daughter of Aretas and to his brother, and on the other hand as a marriage within the forbidden degrees of relationship (Levit. xviii. 16, xx. 21).

5. The historian Josephus gives, as the reason for the murder, simply the fear of the popular movement which John's preaching of the kingdom had given rise to, which might easily have led to a great revolution.

6. *Birthday*: "anniversary." The Greek word may mean either "birthday" or "anniversary of his accession." Herod was at that time more than sixty years old, Herodias nearly fifty, and



Salome at least twenty. Salome was probably already a widow, at any rate she was not the "damsel" which she is assumed to be here and is called in verse 11.

7. For the basis of this legend in the Old Testament, see note on Mark vi. 23.

8. *Charger*: "dish."

9. *And the king was sorry*: This is only intelligible after Mark vi. 19, 20, not after Matt. xiv. 5.

10. *In the prison*: According to Josephus, John died in the mountain fortress of Machærus on the Arabian frontier east of the Dead Sea; but according to Mark vi. 21, the feast was held in Galilee. This makes the speedy succession of events as here narrated impossible.

#### Verses 13—21 = Mark vi. 30—34.

13. *On foot*: Jesus had met his disciples again at Capernaum (Mark vi. 30), and had crossed over from there to the most northern point of the east shore of the lake (Luke ix. 10). The people "out of the cities" of the north-western shore (probably we should understand, in addition to Bethsaida, the Chorazin mentioned in xi. 12), who wanted to overtake him by going on foot along the northern shore of the lake, would be able to reach their goal in a few hours.

14. *Went forth* should be "went out."

15. *The time is now past* should be "the daytime is already past."—It is high time to dismiss the people, in order that they may divide themselves among the villages lying in a wide circle round about, and find shelter and food. It is understood that their minds have been lifted all day above earthly wants and the thought of material provision (Mark vi. 34).

18. Only in Matt. Some suppose that Jesus, by making a beginning with the provisions of those immediately around him, called forth a grand manifestation of hospitality and neighbourly kindness on the part of others who had some provisions and were equally willing to deny themselves. But if so, this kernel of historical recollection is here quite concealed under an Old-Testament colouring of miracle.

19. In the first place, the occurrence is exalted to the level of the ancient Christian love-feast, by the similarity of this verse

to xxvi. 26. According to 1 Cor. x. 3, the manna of the Old Testament (see note on ver. 21) was also a type of the Lord's Supper. See note on Mark vi. 41.—*He blessed*: "he gave thanks" [more exactly, "he offered a blessing"].

20. *And were filled*: taken from v. 6, "they shall be filled." *Twelve baskets*: each apostle collects into one.

21. *Five thousand men*: corresponding to the five loaves in ver. 17. One loaf feeds a thousand men. Thus Elisha is surpassed, who, according to 2 Kings iv. 42—44, fed a hundred men with twenty barley loaves. In the Old-Testament narrative should be noticed especially Elisha's words, "Give unto the people that they may eat" (= ver. 16), the servant's objection, "How can I set this before a hundred men to eat?" (= ver. 17, John vi. 9), and the result, "Then they ate and left some over" (= ver. 20). Additional Old-Testament legends which help to explain this are found in the accounts of other acts of Elisha (2 Kings iv. 38), of Elijah (1 Kings xvii. 7—16) and of Moses (Exod. xvi. 8 sqq., where we have quails instead of fishes, but the latter again in Numb. xi. 21, 22). Moreover, according to the teaching of the Rabbis (Midrash Koheleth), the Messiah will perform the same miracles as Moses. Finally, we also see here the lingering influence of the poetic idea of the satisfying of the hungry wanderers in the wilderness by God's miraculous help (Ps. cvii. 4—9). Taken as actual history, the miracle not only contradicts the stern reality of the self-denying life of Jesus generally, but is directly opposed to his words in iv. 4; while at the same time that very passage, pointing out that man lives not by bread alone, but by every word of God, throws light upon the original contents of the present narrative (see note on ver. 15). This is made still clearer by the continuation of the narrative in the discourse upon "the bread of life" in John vi. 48 sqq. The fundamental idea which is thus artistically realized, is at any rate the idea of this spiritual bread which Jesus gives in the wilderness of earthly existence, distributing it by his apostles. A single word satisfies thousands; and the heavenly treasure, which increases by use, is found after every distribution still unexhausted. See note on xvi. 9, 10.

Verses 22—33 = Mark vi. 45—52.

23. *Evening*: the later part of the evening, about sunset, in



distinction from the early part of the evening mentioned in ver. 15.

24. A legendary repetition of the first storm in viii. 24.

25. *In the fourth watch of the night*: i.e. between three and six o'clock in the morning. The Romans had introduced into Palestine this division of the night into four parts (mentioned in order by name in Mark xiii. 35), in place of the ancient Jewish division into three parts (Exod. xiv. 24). According to the passage from Mark (xiii. 35), it is not known in which of the four watches of the night the Messiah will come to deliver his people. This is one of the things which has given rise to our present legend. Other causes are found in Old-Testament figures, as that God walks upon the sea as upon dry ground (Job ix. 8), that His paths went through great waters wherein His footprints could not be traced (Ps. lxxvii. 19), that Moses and Joshua, and above all Elijah and Elisha (2 Kings ii. 8, 14), passed dry-foot through the water.

28—31. Story of Peter; only in Matt.

31. *Thou of little faith*: contrast to Heb. xi. 29.

33. Only in Matt. Really it was not till a later time that one of the disciples thus confessed him (see p. 46).

34. *Land of Gennesaret*: a district about three miles broad, and not much longer, lying to the south of Capernaum.

#### CHAPTER XV.

Verses 1—20 = Mark vii. 1—23.

1. The position which Jesus occupied with regard to the law had become uncertain. A declaration of his principles is demanded.

2. *The tradition of the elders*: the commandments of the ancients, developed from the time of Ezra by a succession of great scribes, and handed down from generation to generation as a sacred ordinance, a kind of unwritten law, supported by Deut. iv. 14, vii. 11.—*They wash not their hands*: It was not long before this time that the two great teachers Hillel and Shammai had revived the command, founded on Levit. xv. 11, to wash the hands at the beginning and the end of a meal.

3. Jesus replies by a question resting upon the distinction between the traditions, as the word of man, and the written law, as the word of God.

4. As an example, the commandment, Exod. xx. 12, with the more definite provision, Exod. xxii. 17.

5. The scribes declared the gifts to the temple binding, even when the fulfilment of the vow involved the transgression of the first moral commandments, in the present case the duty of supporting one's parents.—*He shall be free*: The unfinished Greek sentence may be thus completed, i.e. "He may do so, he is free from the command to give to his parents the divinely-appointed honour."

8, 9. Is. xxix. 13.

11. *That which goeth into the mouth*: because they are speaking of eating (ver. 2). The more general and correct expression is found in Mark vii. 15.

12, 13. Only in Matt.

13. That which God hath not planted is the Pharisaic tradition (vv. 3, 6, 9).

15. *This parable*, according to verse 17, means the saying in verse 11, and not what immediately precedes; but in the form in which the first Evangelist has it, this is itself rather an explanation than a parable. See note on Mark vii. 15.

Verses 21—28 = Mark vii. 24—70.

21. *The coasts*: i.e. "the regions of Tyre and Sidon." The possessions of these chief cities of Phœnicia extended far to the east, into the land of Galilee.

22. *A woman of Canaan*: a Gentile. The Phœnicians were descendants of the ancient Canaanites.—*Came out of the same coasts*: "went from within their borders." According to the first Evangelist, we must not suppose that Jesus himself entered the heathen territory.

23, 24. Like x. 6, only in Matt. (see p. 43).

26. See note on vii. 6.—Hitherto Jesus' mission has been deliberately and intentionally confined to the Jews. It is only by experiences such as the present one, and that of viii. 5—13, that he is impelled to turn from the Jews to the Gentiles.

27. Acknowledgment of the principle of Jesus; but it will not be overthrown if just one blessing out of all the treasure that Israel has received be allowed as an exception to fall on Gentile ground.



29 = Mark vii. 31.

Verses 30, 31. Only in Matt.

Introduction to the second miraculous feeding, after the example of xiv. 14.

Verses 32—39 = Mark viii. 1, 10.

A second story of feeding a multitude, in which, however, we have only another edition of the first in a new form. Hence the disciples are in despair at the thought of feeding the people, just as if the first miracle had never occurred. Similarly, we have two accounts of the manna, Exod. xvi. 2 sqq., and Numb. xi. 4 sqq.

37. *Seven baskets full*: according to the number of the loaves. The number is different in xiv. 20.

39. *Magdala*, according to another reading "Magada," at the southern extremity of the land of Gennesaret, mentioned in xiv. 34. The journeys that follow upon the feeding coincide, like the feedings themselves.

#### CHAPTER xvi.

Verses 1—4 = Mark viii. 11, 12.

1. *A sign from heaven*: i. e. a clear, indisputable miracle accomplished in sight of all, a sign from God intelligible to all in favour of the Messiah, just what the multiplication of the loaves would have been if taken as actual history. See note on iv. 7.

2, 3. An interpolation of the first Evangelist, who connects the "signs of the time" in Luke xii. 54—56 with the "sign from heaven," because the former are symbolized by "signs in the sky."

4. *The sign of the prophet Jonas*: an addition of the first Evangelist (see note on xii. 40). As he refers this to the resurrection, he has placed the Sadducees, who deny the resurrection, with the Pharisees (vv. 1, 6, 11, 12), in order that they may be disposed of at the same time.

Verses 4—12 = Mark viii. 13—21.

5. *To the other side*: from the west shore to the east.

6. *Leaven*: in xiii. 33 = Luke xiii. 21, it represents the tendency of the good to develope; here and in 1 Cor. v. 6—8 and Gal. v. 9, the contaminating power of evil.

9, 10. By the recollection of the experience here appealed

to, the disciples are to be led to a right understanding of the words of Jesus as figurative. It is impossible, then, that the experience itself can have been such as would be involved by a literal interpretation of the accounts of the feeding of the multitudes. Moreover, after Matt. iv. 4, it is impossible to suppose that Jesus led his disciples to console themselves in every accidental and temporary deficiency of provisions by the thought of his miraculous powers. He had spoken, therefore, of the bread of life, which, unlike to earthly bread, has power to feed thousands without itself diminishing (see note on xiv. 21).

12. The interpretation of the leaven as the teaching [A. V. "doctrine"] of the Pharisees is as far from being exhaustive as the interpretation of it as their hypocrisy, which is given in Luke xii. 1. It can only mean the whole Pharisaic school of thought.

Verses 13—28 = Matt. viii. 27—ix. 1.

13. *Cæsarea Philippi*: the ancient Paneas, which had been restored by Philip the Tetrarch in honour of the emperor Augustus, to whom Herod the Great had already previously built a temple there. It was situated on the borders of ancient Israel, near Dan; but this territory was now altogether heathen, and belonged to the province of Syria. The city stands at the foot of Mount Hermon, surrounded by magnificent scenery, and near the springs of the "lesser Jordan." It was here that Jesus saw "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them" (iv. 8). Here, after an inner struggle and victory (comp. ver. 26), he turned away again to make his last journey to the south, while at the same time he put to his disciples the decisive question which had long trembled on his lips.—[*Coasts*: lit. "parts," i.e. neighbourhood.]

14. See note on Mark vi. 15. Jeremiah, to whom had been assigned, on the ground of 2 Macc. ii. 1—8, the part of a precursor similar to that of Elijah, is also mentioned by the first Evangelist only in ii. 17, xxvii. 9.

16. Within sight of the imperial Gentile city (*Cæsarea*), where sacrifice and worship are offered to the emperor Augustus as a god, a refugee who has fled from the persecutions of his opponents in Galilee, now for the first time, and in the narrow circle of his intimate friends, is by the comprehensive utterance of



Peter, which unites all former impressions in one great and portentous name, formally acknowledged as the Messiah.

17—19. Only in Matt.; composed according to the ideas of the "church" which passed current in Jewish-Christian and Petrine circles. This word is not found in the mouth of Jesus anywhere else except in the passage xviii. 17, which must be regarded precisely in the same way. See note on xviii. 18.

17. *Flesh and blood*: comp. Gal. i. 16. The expression denotes men, the human in opposition to the divine.

18. A corresponding acknowledgment on the part of Jesus in favour of Peter, the first herald of his Messiahship. Old-Testament basis of the figure, in Is. xxviii. 16. Comp. also Gal. ii. 9; 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11; Rev. xxi. 14.—*Church*: community, ecclesia, or church.—*The gates of hell* are strong, for they suffer none to come out again; but they *shall not prevail against it*, i.e. they shall not prove stronger than the building of the church. Comp. xii. 29.

19. Peter shall be steward (Luke xii. 41, 42) and bearer of the keys (comp Is. xxii. 22) in the house of Jesus, as, according to Rev. iii. 7, Jesus is in the house of God. Hence his permissions and prohibitions shall be regarded as valid even before God himself ("in heaven"). To *bind* and to *loose* signifies, in the language of the Rabbis, to declare forbidden or permissible. Many things that the school of Shammai "bound," the school of Hillel "loosed."

21. From the command to restrain their feelings of Messianic triumph (ver. 20), Jesus proceeds formally to damp any such feeling by predicting a lot which he was to suffer, which according to Jewish ideas was absolutely impossible (1 Cor. i. 23). But this scene of suffering and death could not, if Jesus himself believed in his own Messiahship, form the final background of his expectations. The first part of this saying, in which he speaks of his sufferings, has evidently been completed and made more definite in accordance with after experiences (see especially xx. 18, 19), and the other side of the picture seems also to have undergone the same treatment. Jesus spoke of his ascension to heaven, probably also of his return, and in any case of the results of his labour, which more than compensated for the sacrifice of his life, somewhat in the style of Ps. cxviii. 17. This speech of his was

afterwards transformed into a prediction of his "rising again on the third day" (after Hos. vi. 2); but after his death, his disciples do not appear to have been by any means prepared for this.

22. The indescribable perplexity which this announcement could not but cause among the disciples, finds expression in words of terrified affection. *Be it far from thee*, should be, "God be gracious unto thee."

23. See note on iv. 10.—*Savourest not*: "thinkest not." [See Rom. viii. 5.]

24. *His cross*: The condemned were compelled to drag their cross themselves to the place of execution. Hence this verse contains an intensification of the "offence;" the same "way of the cross" being placed before the disciples also as inevitable. Comp. note on x. 38.

25. *For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it*: "For whosoever desires to save his life shall lose it, and whosoever loses his life for my sake shall find it." Selfish gain of life is but the loss of life when tried by the divine standard.

26. See notes on 13, and iv. 8.—*In exchange for his soul*: "as a ransom for his soul." In accordance with the views of the ancient Hebrews, slaves, for example, could be freed from their position of slavery by the payment of a certain sum for their redemption. And there were many ways in which a man might buy freedom or be ransomed. But in Ps. xlix. 8, 9, and here, we find the limits of the possible. Nothing equals the soul in value, so that once lost it can never be redeemed; but without it, the whole world, the sum and substance of all enjoyment, is worthless, ceases indeed to be a reality.

27. It was by the belief in his return that the obstacle which seemed to overthrow the Messiahship of Jesus (namely, the contrast between his actual lot and the Messianic expectations, with the whole religious system of the earliest Christianity), was removed, not only from the minds of the earliest Christians, but also, unless we can declare a whole multitude of Christ's sayings to be unauthentic, from the mind of Jesus himself.

28. This belief in his return has no value, unless the return itself is to be speedy, and to compensate superabundantly for the deficiencies of the miserable reality. Hence all the books of the



New Testament, without exception, down to John xxi. 23 and 2 Peter iii. 9, 10, teach the doctrine of the speedy return.

## CHAPTER xvii.

Verses 1—9 = Mark ix. 2—9.

1. *After six days*: the time from Peter's acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah to the transfiguration appears as a festival week, as in Exod. xxiv. 16 the glory of God in a cloud covers Mount Sinai for six days, until the revelation follows on the seventh. In compensation for xvi. 21, and as a pledge of what was said in xvi. 28 (comp. 2 Pet. i. 16—18), the Gospel legend here introduces, in immediate connection with the complete and active Messiahship, one of its most brilliant pictures, after an Old Testament original; the climax of all physical miracles, the artistic formation of which is here most fully demonstrable.—*Into a high mountain*: a mountain which is as little to be looked for in the actual world as the one mentioned in iv. 8. Represented after Ps. lxxviii. 16—18 (comp. ver. 19 = Eph. iv. 8), it corresponds here to Sinai, which Moses ascends with his three most intimate companions, in order that he may behold the God of Israel in the glorified sapphire depths of heaven (Exod. xxiv. 9, 10).

2. *Transfigured*: strictly, "changed." Those who in the early ages of Christianity denied that Jesus had a material body appealed to this passage. The passage itself is founded on the brilliancy of the face of Moses as he descended from Sinai, represented in 2 Cor. iii. 7—11 as a type of Christ. So we see the glory of God in the face of Christ (2 Cor. iv. 4, 6), and are ourselves thereby transfigured (2 Cor. iii. 18). There is also a moment of transfiguration in Acts vi. 15.

3. How should the disciples know the names of the two figures? From their question in ver. 10, it appears rather that they missed the appearance of Elijah. Moses the lawgiver, and Elijah the representative of prophecy—the former a prophet of the Messiah (Deut. xviii. 15 = Matt. xvii. 5), the latter (according to Mal. iv. 5) to be his precursor—these two here acknowledge the Messiah as greater than themselves. Moreover, both were regarded as having been miraculously taken hence and carried into heaven.

4. *It is good for us to be here*: better, "It is well that we are

here."—*Tabernacles*: "huts," made of bushes and leafy branches of trees.

5. *A bright cloud*: as Moses (Exod. xxiv. 18) stood in the midst of the cloud, which is a symbol of the Divine presence.—*A voice out of the cloud*: so God speaks to Moses (Exod. xxxiii. 9—11). The utterance here is from Psalm ii. 7, Is. xlii. 1, Deut. xviii. 15. The thought which filled the mind of Jesus at the moment of his baptism (see iii. 17, which the first Evangelist repeats more exactly word for word than the others) flowed from him in these last Galilean days into the souls of the disciples. Now Jesus was to them the Messiah, the Son of God. The solitary acknowledgment of Peter is now increased three-fold.

6. Is. vi. 5; Dan. viii. 17, x. 7—9, 16, 17. In Mark ix. 6, Luke ix. 34, the fear falls upon the disciples earlier.

7. Only in Matt.; from Dan. viii. 18, x. 10, 16, 18.

9. The origin of the present representation cannot be explained until the belief in the resurrection has arisen, and given the key to the understanding of the transfiguration as a prophecy of the return of Jesus in glory.

Verses 10—13 = Mark ix. 10—13.

10. From the time of the declaration at Cæsarea Philippi, the Messianic question occupies the thoughts of the disciples. One of their chief difficulties lay in the non-fulfilment of the promise in Mal. iv. 5 (iii. 23).

11. *Shall restore all things*: According to Mal. iv. 6 (iii. 24), he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and that of the children to the fathers.

12. Here belongs xi. 14. The task of the precursor was frustrated by the opposition of the priests (Matt. xxi. 32). So also the Messiah shall end his life in a different way from what the promises give to expect, even as he has appeared in a different way (comp. note on x. 34). Jesus teaches the disciples to see in the termination of John's career the type of his own end.

13. Only in Matt.

Verses 14—21 = Mark ix. 14—29.

15. *Lunatic*: see note on iv. 24.

17. According to ver. 20, this rebuke is addressed to the disciples.



20. For the figurative language (as in xxi. 21), compare 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

21. This verse is wanting in some very old MSS.—*This kind*: so deep-rooted an evil.

Verses 22, 23 = Mark ix. 30—32.

Verses 24—27. Only in Matt.

24. *Tribute money*: not the Roman poll-tax (see xxii. 17, 19), but the temple-tax, consisting of two drachmæ, i.e. half a shekel (about 1s. 8d.) per head. According to Exod. xxx. 11—16, each Israelite must from his twentieth year pay ("as a ransom for his soul," Exod. xxx. 12) this tax, by which the treasury of the temple was filled. The time for its collection was the month of Adar (March).

26. Spoken from the consciousness that he was the Messiah, i.e. Son of God, who might himself lay claim to royal privileges in Israel.

27. See note on iii. 15. *A piece of money*: the Greek is "a stater," which contains four drachmæ (see note on ver. 24). The direction itself is to be understood figuratively, like the expression, "fishers of men," iv. 19; unless, indeed, legend has appended a miraculous fulfilment to the direction to earn the required amount by fishing.

#### CHAPTER xviii.

Verses 1—5 = Mark ix. 33—37.

3 = Mark x. 15.

5. *Shall receive*: i.e. affectionately, Rom. xii. 16.—*One such little child*: type of the most lowly and unassuming.—*In my name*: with regard to the fact that I have commanded it, and it is in accordance with my spirit (see note on x. 41).

Verses 6—9 = Mark ix. 42—48.

6. *Millstone*: properly "donkey millstone," of a mill which was turned by a donkey, greater therefore than the millstone of an ordinary hand-mill (see note on xxiv. 41).

7. Only in Matt.

8, 9. Repetition from v. 29, 30.

Verses 10—14. Only in Matt.

10. Based on the idea of guardian angels of individual persons.

The nearness of the former to the throne of God is proportionate to the worth of the latter.

11. Is wanting in some very old MSS.

#### Verses 15—22.

Only Matt. (vv. 16—21) goes so far beyond Luke xvii. 3, 4.

15. *Tell him his fault*: “rebuke him” (Levit. xix. 17).

16. After Deut. xix. 15. *Every word*: “every matter.”

17. *The church*: see note on xvi. 17—19.

18. See note on xvi. 19. The authority there given to Peter is here extended to the whole community.

20. Comp. 1 Cor. v. 3, 4.

22. The number of times which Lamech, on the other hand, desired to be revenged (Gen. iv. 24).

#### Verses 23—35. Only in Matt.

24. *Ten thousand talents*: two and a quarter million pounds.

25. The ancient law of debt in its mildest form, Levit. xxv. 39, 40; comp. 2 Kings iv. 1.

26. *Worshipped him*: see note on ii. 2.

28. *An hundred pence*: a hundred denarii, i.e. about three pounds.—*Took him by the throat*: as creditors were probably accustomed to drag their debtors into court.

34. *Tormentors*: Herod had introduced torturers for the first time into Israel; here simply jailors are meant.

#### CHAPTER xix.

##### Verses 1—9 = Mark x. 1—11.

1. *Beyond Jordan*: here “Judea” comes to an end, so that the expression must refer to the road through Peræa which Jesus chose.

3. *For every cause*: the question as to the ground of divorce, whether every cause was sufficient, &c. See note on v. 31.

4. Jesus goes back to the very alphabet of the natural creation, Gen. i. 27.

5. Gen. ii. 24.

7. Over against the command contained in the natural order of creation, stands the supplementary provision, Deut. xxiv. 1.

8. *Because of the hardness of your hearts*: yielding to the sensual obstinacy of the popular character.



## 9. Repetition of v. 32.

Verses 10—12. Only in Matt.

12. Properly understood, the saying of the disciples in ver. 10 is true, viz. in relation to those who are morally eunuchs, as, for instance, Jesus himself, and before him John the Baptist, and after him the apostle Paul (1 Cor. vii. 1, 7, 28—38), in opposition to those who are literally born eunuchs or have been made so.

Verses 13—15 = Mark x. 13—16.

13. *Laid his hands upon them*: to bless them, as was the custom of the scribes and teachers.

14. Comp. Gehazi and the Shunammite before Elisha, 2 Kings iv. 27.—*Of such*: of those who are as unassuming and impressible.

Verses 16—26 = Mark x. 17—27.

16. *Good* (before *master*) is not in the oldest MSS.—*Good thing*: What special good thing? Different in Mark x. 17 = Luke xviii. 18.

17. *Why callest thou me good?* The oldest MSS. give a question corresponding to the question that has been asked, “Why askest thou me about the good?” Look to God, who is good; then thou shalt know what the good is. It is different in Mark x. 18 = Luke xviii. 19.

18. From Exod. xx. 13—16.

19. From Exod. xx. 12, Levit. xix. 18. The second of these two quotations is found in the first Gospel only.

20. *Young man*: because in Mark x. 20 = Luke xviii. 21, mention is made of his youth, but that only shows that he was not a young man any longer. Similarly he says here, *What lack I yet?* because in Mark x. 21 = Luke xviii. 22, we have, “One thing thou lackest.”

21. Jesus receives so favourable an impression of him (comp. Mark x. 21) that he is willing to receive him into the more intimate circle of disciples, the number of which is already closed. But the necessary condition, which had been easy for the first disciples (iv. 20, 22), he could not bring himself to comply with.

24. A similar proverb in xxiii. 24.

Verses 27—30 = Mark x. 28—30.

28. An interpolation.—*In the regeneration*: comp. Acts i. 6,

iii. 21; Rev. xxi. 1 sqq.—*In the throne*: comp. Rev. iii. 21. Here, as in Rev. vii. 4—9, the twelve tribes of Israel, represented by the twelve apostles (comp. Rev. xxi. 14), appear as the nucleus of the new people of the covenant.

29. To be explained by Rom. viii. 38, xvi. 13; 1 Cor. iii. 22, iv. 15; 2 Cor. vi. 8—10. Comp. also Acts ii. 44, iv. 32.

30. *Many that are first*: i.e. in position in the present world. In the world to come this will be reversed. There, those who have given up everything here, and so appear as “the last,” will be “the first.” Possibly this saying contains a hint for the self-satisfied questioner of ver. 27.

#### CHAPTER XX.

##### Verses 1—16. Only in Matt.

A parable as an explanation of that which is put at the beginning (xix. 30) and end (xx. 16) in the form of a proverb, and which our Evangelist is reminded of by the incident in vv. 8, 9. In this connection, standing between the ambitious question of Peter (xix. 27) and the desire of the sons of Zebedee for pre-eminence (xx. 21), the parable can only be directed against the Jewish claims generally, and serve to establish the principle that God's reward is of grace.

1. *Early in the morning*: According to the Eastern division of the day, six o'clock is the first hour.

2. *A penny*: a denarius, at that time a very respectable day's wages.

8. *Even*: six o'clock, the twelfth hour.

16. The second half of this verse is a later addition from xxii. 14.

Verses 17—19 = Mark x. 32—34. See note on xvi. 21.

Verses 20—28 = Mark x. 35—45.

20. *The mother*: According to Mark x. 35, the sons themselves, and the answer is addressed directly to them.

21. *On thy right hand and on thy left*: the places of honour. After the three-fold announcement of the sufferings he was to undergo (xvi. 21, xvii. 22, xx. 17, 18), only to be explained on the supposition that the followers of Jesus always let the terrible



thought of his death slip away from their minds, while they clung to words like those of xix. 28.

22. *Cup*: the standing symbol in the Old Testament for fate, and a painful lot (e.g. Is. li. 17; Jer. xlix. 12). So also xxvi. 39. The same lot of death is also symbolized by baptism (Luke xii. 50), by the closing of the water over the head of him who is immersed (Ps. xlii. 8, lxix. 2, 3, 16, cxxiv. 4).

23. Jesus promises that they shall share his lot, but this is not to serve as an assurance of any greater satisfaction of their ambition afterwards.

26. *Minister*: "servant."—[*Will be*: i.e. "desires to be."]

28. *Not to be ministered unto, but to minister*: "Not to be served, but to serve." Developed in Phil. ii. 7, 8.—*A ransom*: see notes on xvi. 26, xvii. 24; what no one, according to these passages, can give either for himself or for another, Jesus is in a position to offer to God in place of many, who would attempt this in vain for themselves. His life, voluntarily sacrificed in the service of men, is at the same time the personal benefit, on the ground of which he requires self-sacrificing service to the brethren as a fundamental law in his kingdom as contrasted with earthly kingdoms. In this thought Jesus himself becomes reconciled to his inevitable earthly defeat, and in its continuous energy and eternal truth lies the reconciling power of his death.

Verses 29—34 = Mark x. 46—52.

29. *A great multitude*: In Jericho the journey of Jesus and his disciples took the form of a Messianic triumphal march.

30. *Two blind men*: see p. 45, and note on ix. 27—31. According to Mark x. 46 = Luke xviii. 35, there was only one; but the narrative of his recovery is the only one among all the accounts of healing the blind (see note on Mark viii. 23) which is intimately connected with the course of the history, inasmuch as this last exercise of healing power resulted in a journey to Jerusalem.—*Thou Son of David*: This declaration of his Messiahship, after some opposition at first (ver. 31), is soon taken up by the whole multitude of followers (hence xxi. 9).

34. *Their eyes received sight*: lit. "They saw again." Hence it is not a case of blindness from birth, but of disease.

## CHAPTER xxi.

## Verses 1—11.

1. *Bethphage*: i.e. "Fig-house," the name of a place somewhere on or near the Mount of Olives, which was only separated from the Temple Mount by the valley of Kidron. It was one of the suburbs of Jerusalem, which the Jewish Talmud still reckons as within the precincts of the city itself.

2. *An ass and a colt*: two beasts, because of ver. 5.

4, 5. Only in Matt. Quotation from Zech. ix. 9, with introduction from Is. lxii. 11. Riding upon an ass instead of on a war-horse is symbolical of the peaceful character of the Messianic kingdom of Jesus.

7. Comp. 2 Kings ix. 13. *Thereon*: The original here is in the plural ["upon them"], which is certainly quite inconceivable.

8. *Hosanna*: i.e. "Pray give salvation." The cry is a free imitation of Ps. cxviii. 25, 26.—*He that cometh*: see note on xi. 3.

10, 11. Only in Matt.

## Verses 12—17 = Mark xi. 15—19.

12. In what was called the forecourt of the Gentiles, a market had gradually been established, in which oxen, doves, and other requisites for sacrifice, were offered for sale, and where money-changers changed the money of various nations (especially for foreign visitors to the festivals), with some deduction, into the two-drachma pieces in which the temple-tax must be paid (see note on xvii. 24). Thus the temple had become fair, cow-house, bazaar and dove-cote, and the bargaining and cheating, which as a necessary consequence was continually going on, was most disturbing to the worshippers.

13. A combination of Is. lvi. 7 (house of prayer) and Jer. vii. 11 (den of thieves).

14—16. Only in Matt.

16. *Read*: viz. in Ps. viii. 3 [where the English version has "strength" instead of "praise;" but the Hebrew word may mean either, and most modern commentators take it there in the sense of "praise"].

17. *Into Bethany*: where he had friends (see note on Mark xi. 3). This is the close of the first day, according to the first Evangelist. Comp. notes on Mark xi. 11, 19.



Verses 18, 19 = Mark xi. 12—14.

19. The fig-tree falsely pretending to a life which it had not really (see note on Mark xi. 13), is the symbol of Israel, in which piety had become mere external show, had run to leaf while the fruit was looked for in vain. We have here the transformation, of Luke xiii. 6—9 into history, under the influence of Hos. ix. 10 and perhaps also of Luke xvii. 6.—*And presently* (i.e. immediately) *the fig-tree withered away*: According to Mark xi. 20, it was not found withered until the next day.

Verses 20—22 = Mark xi. 20—24.

Verses 23—27 = Mark xi. 27—33.

23. *These things*: i.e. the last things which had happened the day before, according to ver. 14 the miraculous cures. Different in Mark xi. 28.—*Who*: i.e. God or man? Jesus is required to make a declaration as to his Messianic claims.

24. This declaration Jesus refuses to give until the priests have first granted him a premise on which he intends to rest his claims, the divine mission of John the precursor (comp. iii. 11, 12).

25, 26. The authorities had simply let the Baptist do as he liked without coming to any decision about him.

Verses 28—31.

This parable is only found in Matthew, though connected with Luke xv. 11—32. The two sons, in the order in which they here appear, represent on the one hand the sinful people yielding at last to the call to repentance, and on the other hand the model Jews promising nothing but holiness, and performing nothing but an outward show of righteousness. But they were early taken as types of heathenism and Judaism, and, as the divine commission was given to the Jews first, the order was accordingly inverted, the son who promised and then failed in his obedience being put first. [In the Vatican MS., where this inverted order appears, we find “the latter” instead of “the first” in ver. 31.]

32. *In the way of righteousness*: i.e. requiring strict observance of the law. Jesus just touches upon the contrast more fully developed in xi. 18, 19.—*Repented not afterward*: confirmation of what is assumed in ver. 25.

Verses 33—46 = Mark xii. 1—12.

33. *Vineyard*: symbol of Israel, after Is. v. 1, 2. The tower

served for the watchman of the vineyard. The owner let the vineyard to husbandmen for a payment in kind, probably a tithe of the produce.

34. *The fruits of it*: more exactly in Mark xii. 2 = Luke xx. 10. Fruit is the symbol of willing fulfilment of duty. Comp. iii. 8.

34—36. The two series of servants represent the prophets, which were distinguished as “earlier” and “later.”

38. *His inheritance*: the rich possession of the Messiah, according to Gen. xv. 2 sqq., Ps. ii. 8.

39. *Cast him out of the vineyard and slew him*: on the meaning of this, comp. Heb. xiii. 12.

42. Ps. cxviii. 22, 23, refers originally to the nation of Israel, lightly esteemed, yet raised by God to high importance. The side walls meet and rest upon the corner-stone. It supports the whole house.

43. Only in Matt. The meaning of the parable.

44. After Is. viii. 14, 15; Jer. vi. 21; Dan. ii. 34, 35. It is under all circumstances dangerous to come in contact with this stone. People knock against it when it lies on the ground; but if it rolls down from above, it crushes their heads.

## CHAPTER xxii.

### Verses 1—14.

This passage = Luke xiv. 16—24, increased by the addition of a new parable (11—14). The whole passage 1—14 is an interpolation, as ver. 15 takes up again the subject of xxi. 46.

4. *Other servants*: as in xxi. 34—36. The words of the king are an imitation of Prov. ix. 2.

7. Allusion to the destruction of Jerusalem.

9. The calling of the Gentiles.

10. *Both bad and good*: the time of the conversion of the masses (comp. ver. 14).

11. *Wedding garment*: the garment, which here makes its appearance, signifies morals and conduct of life. He who is so unexpectedly introduced into the royal palace, without ever having deserved such an honour, should have sufficient tact and delicacy not to insult the royal invitation by the rudeness of his heathen customs.



Verses 15—22 = Mark xii. 13—17.

16. *Herodians*: these were the adherents of the royal house. The Pharisees, on the other hand, were adherents of the popular government. Here, however, they combine against the common danger.

17. *Tribute unto Cæsar or not*: the great question of the day for all enthusiastic dreamers of liberty in Judea. Judas of Galilee had already answered it in the negative, and thereby called down upon himself the fate which the Pharisees, hoping for a similar answer, are now trying to prepare for Jesus. Comp. Luke xx. 20; Acts v. 37. Hence the appeal to his courage, ver. 16.

19. *A penny*: a denarius; the amount of the universal poll-tax, the most keenly felt by the people, and the most hateful to them.

20. The emperors had coins struck for the Jews without a head on them, the idolized heads of the emperors being an abomination to them. But in so great a concourse of foreigners as there was at the festival, there must have been numbers of coins with the head in circulation. Those who bring the coin hope at the same time to rouse the indignation of the Messiah against the foreign government by the sight of one of these.

21. The prevailing coinage is the representative sign of the government which is practically acknowledged. In giving the emperor the coin which bears his image, they do but return to him his own property. But duty to God still remains by the side of this complete and undisturbed. Comp. John xviii. 36.

Verses 23—33 = Mark xii. 18—27.

23. *No resurrection*: comp. note on iii. 7. They know beforehand that the Galilean teacher is on the side of the popular belief.

24. *Marry*: properly, "marry as a brother-in-law." Such marriage to a brother-in-law (levirate marriage) is required by Deut. xxv. 5.—*Seed*: i.e. "descendants."

30. Refers to the "power of God" in ver. 29, which is able to do what is spoken of in greater detail in 1 Cor. xv. 35—50.

31. Refers to "the Scriptures" in ver. 29, viz. Exod. iii. 6, 13, 15, 16. God cannot appeal to dead names, nor set up tombstones as monuments of His promises.

33 = Mark xi. 18.

Verses 34—40 = Mark xii. 28—34.

36. Among the schoolmen of that age, the question had arisen of the distinction between the great and small, easy and difficult, weighty and unweighty, in the law. Inasmuch as the Pharisees regarded their "precepts" and "traditions" as more important than the law, they might be said to "tempt" him (ver. 35). Comp. notes on xv. 2, 5.

37. From Deut. vi. 5.

39. From Levit. xix. 18. See explanation of it, vii. 12.

40. *Hang*: as on hinges.

Verses 41—46 = Mark xii. 35—37.

41. Seeing the dejection of his opponents, Jesus himself comes forward to the attack.

42. See note on i. 1.

43, 44. To the learning of the scribes, according to which the Messiah is descended from David, Jesus opposes the utterance of David himself, who must have known best of all. He quotes the first verse of Ps. ci., which was ascribed to David.

45. If the Messiah stands as high above David as the master above the servant, how can his rank and position be expressed by saying, as incompetent scripturalism affirms, that he is his son? In other cases the ancestor is above his descendants, Abraham above the people that has sprung from him.

46. After Mark xii. 34. The answer to the question is, that Jesus makes his rank as Messiah entirely independent of the descent from David. This descent itself, moreover, would be very difficult to prove.

#### CHAPTER xxiii.

Verses 1—7 = Mark xii. 38—40.

1. *To the multitude and to his disciples*: The discourse which follows is really composed of very different materials. Some is addressed to the people, some to the disciples, and some is addressed directly to his opponents.

2, 3. Only in Matt. Those who have placed themselves in Moses' seat, i.e. made themselves his successors, have themselves assumed the position of teachers; nevertheless, Jesus recognizes them as allowed by God in the same way as the Roman government is (xxii. 20, 21).



4. *They bind*: i.e. they make up out of separate parts; their system of morals is a laboriously compounded mixture.

5. Only in Matt. *To be seen*: comp. vi. 1—5.—*Phylacteries*: strips of parchment, with Deut. xi. 13—22, vi. 4—10, Exod. xiii. 1—17, written on them, called by the Jews Tephillin, and worn, in accordance with Exod. xiii. 9, Deut. vi. 8, on the head and on the heart. They were the objects of the greatest superstition, like amulets in our own time.—*Borders*: see note on ix. 20. [The Greek word is the same which is there translated “hem.”]

7. *Rabbi*: i.e. “my master!” a usual expression of respect in addressing the scribes.

#### Verses 8—11. Only in Matt.

9. *Father*: in the metaphorical sense in which the word is used of the highest spiritual regard.

11 = xx. 26, 27.

#### Verses 13—36.

13. *Woe unto you, scribes*: as in Is. x. 1. The first of seven denunciations of woe.

14. This verse is not found here in the oldest MSS., and has been introduced from Mark xii. 40 = Luke xx. 47.—*Devour widows' houses* = after Ezek. xxii. 25. They make pious women pay them handsomely as their intercessors and spiritual advisers.

15—22. Only in Matt. Second and third woes.

15. While the Pharisees fell so unscrupulously short of their duty to their own nation, they were immensely zealous in their labours to convert the heathen. And then those who were thus gained outdid their teachers, if possible, in perversity.

16. *Gold*: a mercenary nature knows well how to value the gilding.

22. Repetition from v. 34.

23—36 = Luke xi. 39—51.

23. *Mint and anise and cummin*: the smallest produce of the land; while, according to Levit. xxvii. 30, Numb. xviii. 12, Deut. xii. 6, xiv. 22, 23, only corn, oil, must [i.e. new wine; A.V. “wine”], and fruits, were liable to tithe.

24. Only in Matt. The wine was strained, in order that not even the smallest unclean animal might be swallowed with it. [*Strain at*: should be, “strain out.”] The meaning is, Ye who

are over-scrupulous in trifles, and at the same time “swallow” “the weightier matters of the law” (23), i.e. neglect the simplest duties to your neighbours.

25. *Extortion and excess*: The gains of the deception which they practise upon pious enthusiasts (see note on ver. 14) supply their tables (cup and platter).

26. *That the outside of them may be clean also*: If the contents are rightly come by, that makes the dish cleaner than washing and scouring can make it. Taken differently in Luke xi. 40, 41.

27. *Whited sepulchres*: The reason why the sepulchres were whited on the 15th of Adar with slaked lime, appears more correctly from Luke xi. 44.

28. Only in Matt.

29. To this day the so-called “graves of the prophets” are shown on the Mount of Olives.

30. Only in Matt.

32, 33. Only in Matt. What the fathers have left incomplete of their ill deeds, that shall the sons supply (“fill up”). Comp. iii. 7.

34. *I*: In the original passage it is God who speaks. See note on Luke xi. 49.

35. *Abel*: The first murder, according to Gen. iv. 8.—*Zacharias, son of Barachias*: This might mean the priest whom Joash caused to be stoned in the forecourt of the temple (2 Chron. xxiv. 21); the last murder of a servant of God, mentioned in the Old Testament, as the Chronicles stand last according to the Jewish arrangement of the books. But the father of this Zachariah was named Jehoiada. There is probably some confusion between him and the prophet Zachariah, who is called son of Barachia (Zech. i. 1), unless indeed the whole passage is a later addition, and refers to the terrible end which the pious Zachariah, son of Baruch, met with in the temple at the hands of the zealots two years before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans (see note on Luke vi. 15).

Verses 37—39 = Luke xiii. 34, 35.

37. *Thy children*: according to Gal. iv. 25, all Israel.—*Under her wings*: after Is. xxxi. 5, Ps. xxxvi. 8.—*And ye would not*: after Is. xxviii. 12.



38. *Desolate*: The genuineness of this word here, and in Luke xiii. 35, is very doubtful. If we omit it, we must translate, "Your house will be forsaken (i.e. by God, after Is. lxii. 12) for you (i.e. to your hurt)." Contrast to Deut. xi. 12.

39. *Till ye shall say, &c.*: i.e. till ye acknowledge me as the Messiah (see notes on xi. 3, xxi. 9).

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

Verses 1—42 = Mark xiii. 1—37.

1. *Buildings*: The temple proper, together with its courts, terraces, outer walls, and porticos.

2. *See ye not*: In contrast to the disciples, Jesus has eyes only for the dark fate that draws near.—*Thrown down*: after 2 Kings xxv. 13, Mich. iii. 12 = Jer. xxvi. 18. According to Matt. xxvi. 61, Acts vi. 14, Jesus must have proclaimed the judgment of God upon the temple, which was actually destroyed by fire in August of the year 70 A.D.

3. *Thy coming*: i.e. thy second coming to judgment (see note on xvi. 21). This second object of inquiry is wanting in Mark xiii. 4 = Luke xxi. 7, and is taken from the contents of the speech which follows.

#### Verses 4—34.

A stray leaf (see note on ver. 15), from the period of the Jewish war, which has been inserted in the continuous narrative of the Gospels, and which probably is substantially the same as the prophecy in consequence of which the Christians, according to the testimony of Eusebius, left Jerusalem two years before its fall and migrated to Pella. In that case, it is the oldest Christian "Revelation," artistically divided into three chief divisions (4—14, 15—28, 29—34), in each of which we have first a general description of the events which will occur, followed by exhortations and commands of Jesus to Christendom which were supplied by tradition (9 sqq., 23 sqq., 32 sqq.).

4—14. "The beginning of sorrows," first the historical foreground, and then the special lot of the Christian community.

5. This only actually occurred in the form found in Acts v. 36, xxi. 38. Bar-Chochba appeared as the Messiah (130—135 A.D.).

6. *Wars and rumours of wars*: near at hand (Herod Antipas

and Aretas) and distant (on the frontiers of the kingdom).—*The end*: to be explained in the same way as ver. 14.

7. The Parthian wars had broken out again in the year 58, and in addition to these came, as preludes to the other troubles, the Jewish rebellion against Nero, Vespasian's expedition against Judea, and the quarrels of the Jewish factions.—*Famines and pestilences and earthquakes*: to be explained in the same way as Rev. vi. 4—8, 12. Especially it refers to the great famine under Claudius (Acts xi. 28) and Nero, and the earthquakes of the Jordan valley, but also to those in Asia Minor (Laodicea, in the year 61).

8. *Sorrows*: The times of want and trouble, from which at last deliverance and the Messiah were to spring, were called "sorrows of the Messiah" (from Hos. xiii. 13; Micah iv. 9, 10, v. 2; Is. lxvi. 7—9). As the "beginning" of them, appear here terrible natural phenomena and events of world-wide importance beyond the borders of Israel.

9, 10. Repetition from x. 21, 22.

9. *Hated of all nations*: As the Jews had formerly been hated by the Gentiles (comp. note on v. 43), so should the Christians be both by Jews and Gentiles.

10. Desertion and treachery in the community itself.

11. Comp. Acts viii. 9—11.

12. Only in Matt.—*Iniquity*: properly, "neglect of the law" (comp. v. 18).—*The love of many shall wax cold*: as in Ephesus, according to Rev. ii. 4.

13. *Saved*: see note on ver. 22.

14. Insertion of a period of indefinite length, in consequence of the experience of the conversion of the Gentiles, in contradiction to vv. 22, 34, and also to x. 23.—*The end*: the judgment upon the temple and the people, together with the end of the world immediately connected with it (ver. 29).

15—28. The divine judgment in Judea and the flight of the community.

15. Quotation from Dan. ix. 27, xii. 11, which had already been applied (1 Macc. i. 54, vi. 7) to the altar of Olympian Zeus which Antiochus Epiphanes caused to be placed upon the altar of burnt-offering. The original prophecy probably feared some similar proceeding on the part of the Romans, which appeared



quite credible after what Caligula had attempted. On the other hand, it was interpreted later of the experiences of the year 70 (see note on Luke xxi. 20). There is nothing here about any destruction of the city or temple, and in the greater "Revelation" we find the very opposite (Rev. xi. 1—13).—*Whoso readeth*: a plain indication that this prophecy was originally written and not spoken.

16. *Into the mountains*: from Ezek. vii. 16. As a matter of fact, the Christians did not flee into the mountains of Judea, but across the Jordan.

17. *Not come down*: but flee away over the flat roofs. Hastiest flight from the scene of judgment, because of Ezek. vii. 15.

20. *Neither on the Sabbath-day*: consistent with v. 18, but not with xii. 2, 5, 10—12.

22. *Saved*: i.e. brought safely through the troubles here described into the Messianic kingdom. Lest even the elect should perish at last, the days are shortened (Dan. ix. 27).

23. The excitement of the fugitives and the ferment of the times bring on new temptations.

24. Comp. Rev. xiii. 11—17.

26. *In the desert*: An example is afforded by Acts xxi. 38.

28. After Job xxxix. 30, Hab. i. 8. See note on Luke xvii. 37.

### Verses 29—42.

"The end," i.e. the universal transformation which is to take place at the second coming of Christ, after the judgment upon the temple and the people.

29. After Is. xiii. 10, xxxiv. 4; Ezek. xxxii. 7; Joel ii. 10, iii. 3; and probably Rev. vi. 12—14.

30. *Sign of the Son of Man*: the appearance of a brilliant light as the sign of his coming. The mourning tribes of the earth, from Zech. xii. 10, and probably Rev. i. 7. The Son of Man in the clouds, from Dan. vii. 13 (see also Acts i. 9, 11).

31. *Send his angels*: as in xiii. 41.—*A trumpet*: comp. 1 Cor. xv. 22, 1 Thess. iv. 16.—*From the four winds*: comp. Luke xiii. 29.

32. *Is yet tender*: "is now becoming tender" [or more exactly, "has now become tender"]. Fruit begins to appear on the fig-tree about Easter, and then the leaves follow (see note on Mark xi. 13).

34. *This generation*: It is usual to reckon three generations to the century.

35. *My words*: This refers in the first place to the present prophecy. After Is. xl. 8, li. 6.

36. *Not the angels of heaven*: The oldest MSS. add, "neither the Son," as in Mark xiii. 32.

37—39. See Gen. vi. 2—7, 11—13, vii. 1, 5 sqq.

40, 41. Into how close contact shall salvation and destruction come then, wherever any one is overtaken by the judgment!

41 = Luke xvii. 35. It was the duty of the maid-servants to turn the hand-mills.

#### Verses 43—51. Only in Matt.

A full and detailed final exhortation in place of Mark xiii. 33—37, and another form of what appears in Luke xii. 39—46.

43. *The thief*: from Joel ii. 9.

51. *Cut him asunder*: cut him into two pieces, saw him in two.

### CHAPTER XXV.

#### Verses 1—13. Only in Matt.

A parable, originating in Luke xii. 35, 36, from the time of the Evangelist himself, when Christendom was already beginning to be weary and drowsy.

1. *Ten virgins*: As in 2 Cor. xi. 2, Eph. v. 25, the church is the bride, so the separate congregations are the bridesmaids. Comp. Judges xiv. 11; Song of Sol. iii. 11.—*Went forth*: to the bride's house. Thither the wedding is transferred, for the sake of the subject here represented (Christ coming down to his church); but see 1 Macc. ix. 37 sqq., Tobit xi. 21.

8. *Are gone out*: "are going out."

13 = Mark xiii. 33, 35.

#### Verses 14—30.

Amplification of Mark xiii. 34. Comp. Luke xix. 11—27.

15. *Five talents*: £1200.—*According to his several ability*: according to his capability in business affairs and money-making.

21. *Into the joy of thy Lord*: into the blessedness in which he rejoices.

25, 26. Assuming the austerity and love of money on the part



of the master, the servant should have made the more unceasing exertions to satisfy his requirements.

Verses 31—46. Only in Matt.

A final picture from the same hand as xiii. 36—43, elaborating the description of the separation there brought into view. The spread of Christianity over the whole earth is now assumed.

32. *All nations*: according to vv. 40, 45, the Christians themselves stand by the throne and are not included in the judgment. Comp. 1 Cor. vi. 2.—*Goats*: they were considered worthless animals. Comp. Luke xv. 29.

33. *Right*: i.e. on the side of good omen. Comp. Mark xvi. 5, Luke i. 11. The description is based upon Ezek xxxiv. 17.

34. *King*: God is spoken of as King in v. 35, xxii. 2 sqq., and as Judge, x. 32, 33. Hence the name is here, at a later time, transferred to Christ as representative of God.

35. *Ye took me in*: lit. "Ye brought me together;" i.e. together with your own family, brought me into your domestic circle. Based upon Is. lviii. 7, Ezek. xviii. 7.

36. *In prison*: comp. Rev. ii. 10, xiii. 10, Heb. x. 34.

40. *One of the least*: see x. 42, xviii. 6. The whole is an amplification of x. 40—42. Comp. also Prov. xix. 17.

41. Amplification of vii. 23.

46. Amplification of xvi. 27, and also after Dan. xii. 2.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Verses 1—5 = Mark xiv. 1, 2.

2. *After two days*: so that one whole day intervenes.—*The passover*: our Easter (the spring festival of the Teutonic goddess Ostara). The Jewish passover was likewise a spring festival (the beginning of the harvest); but the memory of the deliverance from Egypt was also united with it. The time here meant is the beginning of the feast on the 15th of Nisan (beginning of April), on which day all Israelites had properly to present themselves in the temple and to eat their paschal lamb.

3. Combination of the chief priests, who were Sadducees, with the popular party of the zealots for the law. On Caiaphas, see note on Luke iii. 2.

5. They want to wait till the people who are assembled for

the feast have dispersed again, for fear of the Galilean followers of Jesus. The occurrence which interferes with this plan follows in vv. 14, 15.

Verses 6—13 = Mark xiv. 3—9.

6. *The leper*: Jesus' host is called a leper because he had formerly been one.

7. *Box* should be "bottle" or "vase."—*Ointment*: properly "spikenard," a very fragrant oil from India.

12. *For my burial*: Corpses were embalmed. Hence he points out that this act of love is an unconscious farewell, a work of love and respect performed upon his body beforehand. This was the evening before the "night in which he was betrayed."

Verses 14—16 = Mark xiv. 10, 11.

15. *Deliver him unto you*: i.e. give you an opportunity of laying hold of him secretly, which would not be easy with Jerusalem and the whole neighbourhood so crowded as they then were with visitors come up to the festival.—*They covenanted with him for*: properly, "they weighed for him." The custom of weighing gold had certainly long been obsolete, but the passage, Zech. xi. 12, which, according to xxvii. 9, 10, was then fulfilled, required it. Hence also the *thirty pieces of silver*, according to Exod xxi. 32 the price of a slave, about £3. 15s.

Verses 17—19 = Mark xiv. 12—16.

17. *On the first day of the feast of unleavened bread*: Originally only the days from 15th to 21st of Nisan belonged to the "feast of unleavened bread." But just as the whole festival which began with the slaughter of the paschal lamb on the 14th of Nisan was called the passover, so conversely the name "feast of unleavened bread" was extended so as to include the 14th as the first day. The lamb had to be slaughtered before sunset of this day (Exod. xii. 6).

18. *To such a man*: Too concise to be definite. Comp. Mark xiv. 13—15. Some appointment must have been made with a friend who was resident in Jerusalem.

Verses 20—29 = Mark xiv. 17—25.

23. On the basis of Exod. xii. 1—20, a formal usage had been established with regard to the paschal meal, in which we find, in



addition to the lamb, a broth in which bread and bitter herbs were dipped. This is probably "the dish." Hence the saying here reported does not point out Judas individually, but only indicates that the traitor is one who is with them at the sacred meal. It is by the connection with ver. 25, only found in the first Gospel, that this is changed.

25. Only in Matt., and rests upon the supposition that Judas had, in ver. 23, put out his hand to the dish just at the same time as Jesus.

26. *Bread*: one of the cakes of unleavened bread ("mazzoth").—*Blessed it*: "gave thanks" [more exactly, "offered a blessing"]. The custom was for the father of the household, whose place Jesus here takes, to say, "Blessed be God, who bringeth bread out of the earth!"—*This is my body*: inasmuch as it will be broken like the bread. This is known as "Jesus' last parable."

27. *Cup*: During the paschal meal various cups were passed round. This is probably the third, which was called "the cup of blessing" (1 Cor. x. 16). In taking it, the blessing was uttered, "Blessed be God, who hath created the fruit of the vine."

28. *This*: i.e. red wine mixed with water, with which the cup which Jesus took up from the table was filled. In this, Jesus sees in the solemnity of this last moment the blood of the sacrifice of the covenant, by the sprinkling of which the old covenant had formerly been made upon Sinai (Exod. xxiv. 8); after this comes a new covenant of grace and forgiveness (Jer. xxxi. 33, 34). As each one drinks the wine, so also—and what a comfort is the thought in this bitter hour of separation!—so also shall his blood, shed in his violent death, flow for the welfare of many, who as his followers become (what they never were as disciples of Moses) God's children. Thus they become a new people, in a new covenant (testament) with the Father. Hence the "new testament," Luke xxii. 20.—*The new testament*, should be "the covenant."—*Is shed*: "is being shed."—*For the remission of sins*: comp. Jer. xxxi. 34, Is. xxxiii. 24.

29. *This fruit of the vine*: an expression taken from the ceremony of the Easter festival (see note on ver. 27).—*New*: in the renovation of the world, xix. 18, comp. Is. xxv. 6.

Verses 30—35 = Mark xiv. 26—31.

30. *An hymn*: “the hymn of praise,” probably Pss. cxv.—cxviii.

31. *Be offended because of me*: have occasion to be disconcerted in your belief in me. Quotation from Zech. xiii. 7, in support of this.

32. Anticipation of xxviii. 7, 16; but it breaks the connection here.

Verses 36—46 = Mark xiv. 32—42.

36. *Gethsemane*: (i.e. oil-press) lay on the Mount of Olives. The words of Jesus recall Gen. xxii. 5, Exod. xxiv. 14.

37. He desires to be alone and yet not entirely alone.

38. The words recall Ps. xlii. 7, 11.

39. *Cup*: comp. xx. 22. Here Jesus still seems to see before him the cup of the last supper, and of the “hymn,” Ps. cxvi. 13.

41. *The flesh*: the physical nature of the human soul is overcome by the impressions which rush overpoweringly upon it.

42. After vi. 10.

44. Only in Matt., to bring out the number of three acts of prayer (see p. 44).

Verses 47—56 = Mark xiv. 43—50.

47. Judas had separated himself from the company when they set out on their walk by night, to get the priests to put the temple guard at his service, and to deliver up his Master to them before daybreak.

49. Recalls 2 Sam. xx. 9, 10.

52—54. Only in Matt.

52. The saying about the sword, from Rev. xiii. 10.

53. *Twelve legions*: instead of the twelve disciples.

54. *The scriptures*: probably Is. liii., Pss. xxii. lxix., and also cxviii. 22 (comp. Matt. xxi. 42).

Verses 57—68 = Mark xiv. 53—65.

57. The council was at once hastily called together in the night. A third part was sufficient to make its determination valid.

58. *Palace*: here means the inner court.

59. *False*: The high council only wanted now to invent some legal ground for their proceedings. The sentence of death was already determined upon. Comp. Ps. xxvii. 12.



61. They thought that they were producing something decisive when they appealed to an insulting speech about the temple. See note on xxiv. 2.—*In three days*: i.e. in the shortest time. See note on Mark xiv. 58.

63. *I adjure thee*: i.e. I require a declaration on oath (Jos. vii. 19; 1 Kings xxii. 16); a declaration upon the question at issue between Jesus and the high-priesthood, whether he was the Messiah or not. See note on ii. 15.

64. *Hereafter*: "from this time forth." The blasphemy of Jesus' acknowledgment that he was the Messiah really lay in the miserable appearance which he presented at the time, diametrically opposed to all the popular Messianic ideas. Hence he refers them to the immediate future ("from this time forth," see note on xxiv. 34), when they shall perceive the signs which, according to Ps. cx. 1 (see note on xxii. 43, 44) and Dan. vii. 13 (see note on xxiv. 30), declare the Messiah.

65. *Rent his clothes*: as a sign of the deepest indignation. 2 Kings xviii. 37.

66. The penalty for blasphemy was death (Levit. xxiv. 16); and it was a case of blasphemy which was now laid before them, for the honour of God was directly concerned in the Messianic question. See Jer. xxvi. 11.

67. As soon as he is condemned their hatred breaks out. Comp. Micah iv. 14; Is. l. 6, liii. 3—5; 1 Kings xxii. 24.

68. It is understood that they covered his face (Mark xiv. 65 = Luke xxii. 64).

Verses 69—75 = Mark xiv. 66—72.

71. *Another*: according to Mark xiv. 69, it was the same who informed the servants standing by of her discovery.

73. The Galileans had a broad provincial pronounciation.

74. *Then began he to curse*: i.e. to curse himself if he lied.

#### CHAPTER xxvii.

Verses 1, 2 = Mark xv. 1.

1. *When the morning was come*: The work of the night, in order that it might seem legal, required supplementing by further proceedings, as, according to Jewish usage, sentence of death could only be pronounced by day. Hence, immediately upon the rising

of the sun, the council, which had meanwhile increased to its full number, confirms the resolution which had already been arrived at. [Luther renders this verse, "But in the morning all the high-priests and the elders of the people held a council upon Jesus that they might put him to death," which Holtzmann accepts, and explains as above; but De Wette says, 'After they had passed sentence of death (xxvi. 66), they took counsel as to the best way of carrying it out.']

2. *Governor*: He usually resided at Cæsarea, but it was his custom to come to Jerusalem at the time of the passover. He was now required by them because, from the time of the expulsion of Archelaus, the Jews had lost the right of deciding capital cases. See note on Luke iii. 1.

#### Verses 3—10. Only in Matt.

5. The traitor's end, after 2 Sam. xvii. 23.

6. *It is not lawful*: Deut. xxiii. 19. Concerning a later tradition, see note on Acts i. 18.

8. *The field of blood*: so Acts i. 19.

9, 10. This whole legend springs simply from Zech. xi. 12, 13 (here erroneously ascribed to Jeremiah, on account of the purchase of the field, Jer. xxxii. 6—15, and the "house of the potter," Jer. xviii. 2, 3). The prophet resigns his office as shepherd over Ephraim: "And they weighed as my wages thirty pieces of silver; and the Lord said unto me, Cast into the treasury the magnificent price at which I have been valued by them. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and cast them in the house of God into the treasury." We find these verses here in a translation which is full of misunderstandings. Especially the Evangelist has rendered "*el hajozer*" (into the treasury) as if it were "*el hajozer*" (to the potter), and consequently speaks afterwards not only of the "field of blood," but also of the "potter's field."

#### Verses 11—14 = Mark xv. 2—5.

11. The question shows us the form of the charge made by the Jews, viz. that in laying claim to the position of Messiah Jesus had at the same time declared war against the existing order of government, and especially against the supremacy of Rome. The Messianic title is cunningly transformed into "Son



of God" before the Jewish council, and into "King" before the Gentile judge.

12—14. Jesus submits to the lot that is prepared for him. Comp. also Is. liii. 7 = Acts viii. 32.

Verses 15—23 = Mark xviii. 6—14.

15. *At that feast*: the conception of the passover had special reference to sparing and showing favour, Exod. xii. 27. [The Greek is literally "at feast," and is taken by many commentators to mean "at each feast," and rendered by Lightfoot "at feast-time."]

16. *Barabbas*: The name means "son of the father," i.e. of the Rabbi (see note on xxiii. 9), so that he must have been the son of some well-known scribe. See note on Luke xiii. 1. If we can trust some of the ancient authorities, his proper name was Jesus.

17. According to this verse, it is Pilate himself who gives the people the choice, which, however, was probably due rather to circumstances than to his special wish (see note on Mark xv. 11).

18. *For envy*: of his popularity among the people.

19. Only in Matt.

Verses 24, 25. Only in Matt.

Additions made by tradition; the first being a Jewish symbolic action, Deut. xxi. 6, 7.

Verses 26—30 = Mark xv. 15—19.

26. Scourging, which was itself often fatal, was the standing prelude to the Roman punishment of crucifixion.

27. *The soldiers*: As the sentence of death could only be passed by the Romans, so it could only be executed by them.—*Common hall*: "judgment hall" [prætorium, i.e. the governor's quarters]; here the palace of king Herod, in which Pilate resided.—*Band*: the governor's body-guard.

28. *A scarlet robe*: a red soldier's mantle, called a sagum.

29. The Gentile soldiers gratify their feelings of contempt for the Jews by dressing him in this mock royal robe.

Verses 31, 32 = Mark xv. 20, 21.

31. *They took the robe off from him*: Public mockery of Judaism was strictly forbidden to the Roman soldiers.

32. *Out*: The execution had to take place outside the city (see Levit. xxiv. 14). But besides this, the Romans usually crucified by the side of the highway for the sake of the greatest possible publicity.—*Cyrene*: in Libya. There were many Jews settled there. Acts vi. 9.—*Compelled*: comp. note on v. 41.—*His cross*: see note on xvi. 24.

Verses 33—44 = Mark xv. 22—32.

33. *Place of a skull*: so called from the rounded form of the bare hill ("Mount Calvary").

34. *Vinegar*: the oldest MSS. read "wine." The Jews were accustomed to give soporific drinks to those about to be executed in order to dull their sensations.—*With gall*: probably means wormwood, but the word gall is chosen because of Ps. lxix. 22.

35. The clothes of those who were crucified fell to the lot of the soldiers who were appointed to the hangman's office. The second half of this verse, from *that it might* to the end, with the quotation from Ps. xxii. 18, is not authentic, and has been introduced from John xix. 24.

36. Four soldiers to each cross, who answered with their own lives for the execution of the death warrant.

37. It was the Roman custom for such an inscription to be carried before the criminal as he walked to the place of execution.

39. After Ps. xxii. 7.

40. See xxvi. 61.

43. Only in Matt. After Ps. xxii. 8.

Verses 45—53 = Mark xv. 33—38.

45. Nature mourns for the dead, as is to be expected in a popular representation of such overwhelming events.

46. *About the ninth hour*: three o'clock in the afternoon.—The last words, as he faints away, like so much that has preceded, belong to the same Psalm (Ps. xxii. 1) that has had so great an influence upon the form of the whole narrative (see notes to vv. 35, 39, 43). Comp. especially Ps. xxii. 16. The words are here given in Aramaic on account of the following verse.

47. *Elias*: as precursor and restorer. Comp. xvii. 11.

48. *Vinegar*: sour wine such as the Roman soldiers were accustomed to carry with them on the march. But the misunderstanding in ver. 47, which is in any case suspicious, could



not possibly have arisen in the minds of Roman soldiers to whom "Eli" and Elias were equally unknown.—*On a reed*: The crosses were not very high.—*Gave him to drink*: Thirst is one of the special pangs of the torture of the cross. What they had heard must have been a cry of pain.

51. In the Gospel of the Hebrews, the lintel of the temple-door falls to the ground. These are symbolic representations of the fall of the ancient sanctuaries; perhaps also (as the veil covered the holy of holies, the dwelling-place of God) representations of the thought contained in Rom. v. 2, Eph. ii. 18, iii. 12.

52. Only in Matt. A later legend, resting, like Luke xxiii. 43, on the tendency, which had then arisen, to the idea afterwards expressed in the words of the creed, "he descended into hell" (comp. Eph. iv. 9, 1 Pet. iii. 19).

53. *After his resurrection*: because he must still be "the first fruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. xv. 20).

Verses 54—61 = Mark xv. 39—47.

54. *The centurion*: see note on viii. 5. He was obliged to remain all the time upon the spot. There is a different explanation of his words in Mark xv. 39.

55. See Luke viii. 2, 3.

56. *Magdalene*: called after the name of her home to distinguish her from other women of the name of Mary. See note on xv. 39; Luke viii. 2.—*The mother of Zebedee's children*: called Salome in Mark xv. 40.

57. *Arimathæa*: the ancient Ramathaim, 1 Sam. i. 1.

58. Usually the Romans let the bodies of those who were crucified rot away on the cross. Sometimes, however, they gave them up to their friends for a sum of money. On this occasion, moreover, they would have some regard to the very different custom of the Jews (Deut. xxi. 23).

60. Jerusalem is still surrounded by such rock sepulchres and caves. See note on xxiii. 29.

61. *The other Mary*: comp. ver. 56. Not the mother of Jesus.

Verses 62—66. Only in Matt.

62. *The day of the preparation*: Friday, because it was the day on which preparation was made for the Sabbath.

63. Impossible. See note on xvi. 21.

64. Hence we see that this narrative is only introduced in order to destroy the point of the Jewish assertion, directed against the belief in the resurrection, that the disciples had stolen the corpse. If Jesus had really promised that he should rise again on the third day, it follows from the whole account of the proceedings which we possess, that not even the disciples who fled (xxvi. 56) and were sad (Luke xxiv. 17 sqq.), nor the women, who intended to embalm the body (Mark xvi. 1), could have taken the saying seriously. And in the sequel the women do not act as if there were any guard before the grave (xxviii. 1), and are only anxious about the stone (Mark xvi. 3).

[65. *Ye have a watch*: perhaps, "take a watch," which is Luther's translation, and is accepted by Prof. Holtzmann without comment; but in any case the meaning is not that they had already soldiers at their command, but that their request is granted there and then.]

66. *Sealing*: after Dan. vi. 17. A cord running across the entrance to the grave was fastened at both ends with sealing-earth.

#### CHAPTER xxviii.

Verses 1—8 = Mark xvi. 1—8.

Paul, who gives the earliest account in 1 Cor. xv. 4—8; and has the first word upon the whole question of the resurrection, knows nothing of this scene.

1. *In the end*, &c. should be "But after the Sabbath at the dawn of the first day of the week."

2—4. These verses, which are only in Matt., are rendered necessary by xxvii. 62—66.

6. *He is not here*: the only words of the angel in which the three Evangelists agree.

7. Fulfilment of xxvi. 32.

Verses 9—20. Only in Matt.

9, 10. An independent, later tradition, coinciding in substance with the earlier one in vv. 5—8.

11—15. The conclusion of xxvii. 62—66, xxviii. 2—4.

16. *Into Galilee*: It is probably historically correct that the disciples who had fled (xxvi. 56) did not collect together again



until they reached Galilee. There Christianity was born a second time.

18—20. The oldest account (1 Cor. xv. 5—7) knows of nothing beyond visions. Here the arisen Jesus is heard speaking, and his words stand on the same level of ideal truth as in Rev. i. 8, 11, 17—20.

18. Repetition and climax of xi. 27.

19. *Teach*: lit. "make disciples of."—*All nations*: to be regarded in the same way as xxiv. 14, xxv. 32.—*In the name*: lit. "into the name," i.e. so that those who are baptized enter into a living religious connection with the bearer of the name, while they acknowledge that the bearer of the name is what the name denotes: viz. that God is "Father," that Jesus in relation to Him is "Son," and that the Spirit that lives in the community is the "holy Spirit." On the three-fold baptismal formula, see pp. 42 sq.

20. *With you*: repetition and climax from xviii. 20.

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK.

### CHAPTER I.

#### Verses 1—4.

In the original, these four verses form one sentence, of which John is the subject, with a parenthetical reference to passages in the prophets. Literally : (The preparatory) *beginning of the Gospel* of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, *was* (as it is written, &c.) *John*, who was baptizing in the wilderness, &c. In the second Gospel, the regular opening of the evangelical statement is preserved (comp. Acts i. 21, 22, x. 37), the introductory narrative and legends of the childhood, which we find in the first and third Gospels, being later additions.

2. *In the prophets* : Two prophets are actually quoted here ; first, Malachi (iii. 1), exactly as in Matt. xi. 10 = Luke vii. 27, and then (in ver. 3) Isaiah (xl. 3). Notwithstanding this, the oldest known reading is, "in the prophet Isaiah."

Verses 3—6 = Matt. iii. 3—6 = Luke iii. 3—6.

4. *Baptism of repentance for the remission of sins* : a baptism which is the proper accompaniment of the change of spirit within (repentance), representing that change symbolically by immersion, the symbol of the entire disappearance of the previous disposition of the man. At the same time it was also to enable every one who thus testified to the spiritual change within, to secure actual forgiveness. (See note on Matt. iii. 6).

Verses 7, 8 = Matt. iii. 11 = Luke iii. 16.

Verses 9—11 = Matt. iii. 13, 16, 17 = Luke iii. 21, 22.

Verses 12, 13 = Matt. iv. 1, 2, 11 = Luke iv. 1, 2, 13.

13. *And was with the wild beasts* : a standing and very descriptive phrase for residence in the wilderness. Comp. 2 Macc. v. 27, "Judas withdrew himself into the wilderness, and lived in the mountains after the manner of beasts."



Verses 14, 15 = Matt. iv. 12, 17 = Luke iv. 14.

14. *The Gospel of the kingdom of God*: see p. 33. From the very first, Jesus' preaching was a preaching of the kingdom, of the business he had in hand. It was not till later (viii. 31 and onwards) that he also spoke of his own person and office.

15. *The time is fulfilled*: In the irresistible consciousness of the greatest crisis that has ever fallen upon mankind. All that lies behind appears only as a preparation and introduction. Comp. Gal. iv. 4.

Verses 16—20 = Matt. iv. 18—22.

16. Here we see the geographical connection of events. Jesus coming from the south takes his way along the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, and comes to Capernaum (ver. 21), where the fishermen dwell, whom he calls as he sees them upon the shore.

Verses 21—28 = Luke iv. 31—37.

21. This Sabbath may be regarded as the opening day of Jesus' ministry. Consistently with the circumstances in which the second Gospel was composed (p. 46), the bare outline which we have hitherto found is now succeeded by a more detailed narrative.

22. The first great excitement is caused by the teaching of Jesus. What he says is original, incisive, altogether different from the traditional style of the schools, and never fails to make itself felt.

24. The demoniac speaks of himself in the plural, for the same reason as in v. 9. Comp. note on Matt. iv. 24, viii. 29.—*The holy one of God*: i.e. the one whom God has chosen out, consecrated, anointed, the Messiah.—[*Let alone*: in the Greek simply an exclamation = "Ha." But Alford and Tischendorf omit, with some old MSS.]

25. The demoniac continues to cry after him, until Jesus, exalted by the triumphant sense of his own spiritual superiority, with a manifestation of evident annoyance, imperatively bids him be silent. He possesses an energy of will and faith, which he is able also to impart to others.

26. The convulsions of the epileptic.

27. The final result arouses in Jesus himself the consciousness of this power which he possesses, and awakens belief in it in the

company round about him. This is the occasion for Jesus' exertion of power which henceforth developed itself in this direction, and which tradition especially delighted to deal with.

Verses 29—34 = Matt. viii. 14—17 = Luke iv. 38—41.

29. The house of Simon is henceforth the central point of the ministry in Capernaum (ii. 1 sq., iii. 20, ix. 33).

33. The house of Jesus is besieged—a trait which is peculiar to the second Gospel (comp. ii. 2, iii. 20).

34. *Suffered not the devils to speak*: so, iii. 12. In the same way, silence is imposed upon those who are healed upon other occasions (ver. 44, v. 43, vii. 36, viii. 26). Jesus hesitates to trust his cause to the deceptive channels of a belief in the miraculous aroused in the excited populace.

Verses 35—39 = Luke iv. 42—44.

35. In order that he may be alone and recover himself in prayer, he leaves the house secretly before daybreak.

36. *Followed after him*: literally, "pursued him," as one who had escaped from them.

37. Early in the morning the inhabitants renewed the proceedings which they had begun the evening before (ver. 32).

38. *Came I forth*: better, "went I out." His commission extends to all; hence he had been afraid of an uncharitable limitation of his ministry to one place, and had endeavoured to avoid it.

39. First discourse on the journey. Here his acts of healing are confined to the sphere of mental life, which was at that time the favourite, and the one in which there was most demand for them, and which at any rate has the surest historical basis. Unless we grant that striking results of this kind were produced, it is impossible to obtain any intelligible picture of the life of Jesus.

Verses 40—45 = Matt. viii. 1—4 = Luke v. 12—16.

43. It seems that the man, who was pronounced clean, was sent against his own will to Jerusalem, as directed by the law. There he must be pronounced clean by the priests before his company could be tolerated, especially in the house. See note on Matt. viii. 3.—*Straitly charged him*, should be "was angry with him."

45. It appears from this verse that the course which the life



of Jesus was compelled to take in consequence of these acts of healing, was by no means welcome to him. He had intended to take up the work of a teacher in the cities. But it is precisely in the cities that he finds the part of a worker of miracles forced upon him, and from this he withdraws.—*Into the city*, should be “into a city.”

#### CHAPTER ii.

Verses 1—12 = Matt. ix. 1—8 = Luke v. 17—26.

2. Only in Mark. As the people fear that he will again only remain there a short time, they are desirous of availing themselves at once of his presence.

4. They ascend by the customary external staircase to the flat roof of the one-story house, take up the laths and tiles, and let down the bed, with the sick man, like a coffin.

5. *Thy sins be forgiven thee*: “Thy sins are forgiven thee.” [The MSS. have two readings here, one of which means strictly, “Thy sins are forgiven thee,” the other, “Thy sins are being forgiven thee;” so also in ver. 9.]

Verses 13—22 = Matt. ix. 9—17 = Luke v. 27—39.

13. Only in Mark.

14. *By*: viz. by the tax-office.—*Receipt of custom*: “tax-office.”—Levi: see p. 42.

15. Other tax-gatherers perceive the trust which is shown by the calling of one of their company, and so a friendly meal takes place in the house of Jesus, which scandalizes the pious people who are lying in wait for him.

18. According to this, the occasion for the following discussion was offered by the general custom of fasting of that time, to which the penitent disciples of John and the “pious” conformed most strictly.

Verses 23—28 = Matt. xii. 1—8 = Luke vi. 1—5.

25. *When he had need*: These words, which are peculiar to the second Gospel, go to the root of the matter. “Necessity has no law.”

26. *Abiathar*: a mistake for his father Abimelech.

27. Only in Mark. The Sabbath is a divine ordinance for the rest and refreshment of man. It is not an end in itself for which men should be enslaved and tortured.

28. From the fundamental superiority of man to the Sabbath, is derived the special right of the "Son of Man," to whom pertain all rights and honours of mankind. In the phrase "Son of Man," in addition to the national element (= Messiah, see note on Matt. viii. 20), there is also a general and truly human element. Jesus apprehends the former in the light of the latter.

### CHAPTER iii.

Verses 1—6 = Matt. xii. 9—14 = Luke vi. 6—11.

3. *Stand forth*: All is to be done quite openly before the spies who watch him.

4. *To do good*: This second narrative of the Sabbath runs parallel with the previous one. Here the same emancipating power is assigned to the work of love which is there assigned to the work of necessity (see note on ii. 25). The work is represented under the general conception of a morally good deed, the omission of which would be an evil deed. In order to present this still more vividly, he represents healing or not healing more generally as a saving of life or killing. In matters of life and death, even Jewish tradition allowed the neglect of the Sabbath.

6. *With the Herodians*: see note on Matt. xxii. 16.

Verses 7—19 = Matt. iv. 23—25, x. 1—4, xii. 15, 16 = Luke vi. 12—19.

7. *To the sea*: Here, as almost always in the Gospels, "the sea" means the Lake of Gennesareth. (Luke vi. 17 is an exception.)

8. An increasing concourse of people even from the furthest parts of Roman Palestine (Idumea), and from the Gentile maritime district between Palestine and the Mediterranean (Tyre and Sidon).

9. Only in Mark; comp. iv. 1.

11. Only in Mark. See note on Matt. iv. 24, viii. 29.

13. *A mountain*, should be "the mountain." The mountain is here contrasted with the shore of the lake. Jesus withdraws again from the turbulent and urgent demands that are made upon him, and proceeds to separate a small permanent community from the ever-changing crowd of followers, in order that he may establish his work upon a lasting foundation.



14. The five (see i. 16, 19, ii. 14) are increased to twelve. (Comp. also Exod. xviii. 13—27.)

16. *Peter*: i.e. "Rock" (in Aramaic, Kephass). The giving of this name is placed later in Matt. xvi. 18, and earlier in John i. 42.

17. *Boanerges*: This is the Aramaic form which is found in the Greek MSS. The Hebrew is Beneregesh.

Verses 20—30 = Matt. xii. 22—37 = Luke xi. 17—23.

20, 21. Only in Mark.

20. *And the multitude cometh together again*: comp. ver. 7, and note on i. 33.

21. *His friends*, should be "his relatives."—*Went out*, should be "set out."—His relatives, who in ver. 31 actually stand at the door, set out from Nazareth, and perhaps also (John ii. 12) from Cana, to find this member of the family whose unintelligible conduct has alienated him from them, and to withdraw him forcibly from his public life. The same suspicion of insanity was noised abroad in the case of Paul (2 Cor. v. 13). Here it forms an introduction to the much more culpable slander of the Pharisees in ver. 22.

22. *Down from Jerusalem*: either returning home from a feast, or sent from there (ver. 8) to watch the new prophet. Comp. vii. 1.

23. Only in Mark.

29. [*Eternal damnation*: Several of the best MSS. read, "shall be in danger of (or, as some translators take it, "shall lie under") eternal sin."]

30. See note on Matt. xii. 31.

Verses 31—35 = Matt. xii. 46—50 = Luke viii. 19—21.

The relatives mentioned in 21 (the connection does not appear till we reach this verse) stand without, on account of the entrance being choked by the multitude, and cause their presence to be announced; but Jesus, who knows their intention, rejects them as not kin to him in spirit. We have here the companion picture to vi. 1—4.

#### CHAPTER iv.

Verses 1—34 = Matt. xviii. 1—34 = Luke viii. 4—18.

10. *Asked of him the parable*: We should probably read, "asked of him the parables." They asked him concerning the meaning

and interpretation of them. The expression is intermediate between Matt. xiii. 10, where Jesus is asked the reason generally why he teaches in parables, and Luke viii. 9, where he is asked the meaning of the particular parable which he has just uttered.

11. *Unto them that are without*: i.e. outside the narrower community. Comp. 1 Cor. v. 12, 13; Col. iv. 5; 1 Thess. iv. 12; 1 Tim. iii. 7; where it means distinctly those who are not Christians.

12. As the Evangelists (see note on Matt. xiii. 11), in virtue of the saying of Isaiah (vi. 9, 10), which is alluded to here also, assign to Jesus as his original intention what really was the final result of his public preaching, they represent him as speaking in parables in order that the real matter of his preaching may be hidden from the people under this outer covering. The difference is only that here, and in Luke viii. 10, speaking in parables secures the completion of a divine judgment, whereas in Matt. xiii. 11—15 it is the result of a divine sentence which has been passed upon the people. Both alike are later artificial justifications of the simple fact.

13. This verse may also mean, "Ye know not this parable, and how ye are to understand the other parables." He takes up the question of ver. 10.

21. [*Candle, candlestick*, should be "lamp," "lampstand."]—*Bed*, should be "bench."—Understanding is only imparted to the disciples in order that it may be further spread abroad. Truth exists that it may be shared, as the object of a light is that its rays may be dispersed as widely as possible. Another form of this saying is found in Matt. v. 15, Luke xi. 33.

22. The saying is universally true, without exception, that everything which actually is, must some time or other be evident to the human intellect. Another form is found in Matt. x. 26 = Luke xii. 2.

24. The more carefully they give heed to what they have heard, the more abundantly will the truth be disclosed to them. The words, "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you," which break this connection, are taken from Matt. vii. 2 = Luke vi. 38.

25. *He that hath*: The proper esteem and appreciation of the true riches is represented as itself a possession which increases



by a natural necessity. Stagnation is impossible. The first Evangelist applies the words somewhat differently (see note on Matt. xiii. 12), and the saying appears in a different form again, and with a different meaning, in Matt. xxv. 29 = Luke xix. 26.

27. *And should sleep*: i.e. do nothing more (Ps. cxxvii. 2).

29. *When the fruit is brought forth*: strictly, "when the fruit allows it." For the rest, comp. Joel. iii. 13 (in the Heb. iv. 13)

Verses 35—41 = Matt. viii. 18, 23—27 = Luke viii. 22—25.

35. The first journey. It is towards the east (Peræa).

36. *As he was in the ship*: reference to ver. 1.

38. *A pillow*: In the stern of the ship was a pillow, probably intended for the helmsman.

41. *What manner of man is this?* "Who is this?"

#### CHAPTER V.

Verses 1—20 = Matt. viii. 28—34 = Luke viii. 26—39.

2. On the difference between this account and Matthew's, see pp. 44 sq.

4, 5. Only in Mark.

9. The dark, mysterious power to which the demoniac feels that he is subject is one, inasmuch as it is ascribed to the devil, but consists, like a Roman legion, of many individuals.

13. *Down a steep place*, should be "over the precipice."—*Two thousand*: only the second Evangelist specifies this. The Roman legion consisted of three times the number, or more.

20. *Decapolis*: see note on Matt. iv. 25.

Verses 21—43 = Matt. ix. 18—26 = Luke viii. 40—46.

22. *One of the rulers of the synagogue*: each of the synagogues had a governing body consisting of several elders, a local school council.

30. Materialistic theory of miracles of the Evangelists founded upon the idea (iii. 10, v. 28, vi. 56) of those who were healed.

32. Only in Mark.

37. We find this narrower circle of disciples also in ix. 2, xiv. 33, comp. xiii. 3.

42. *Twelve years*: this was the duration of the sickness of the woman whose story had become entangled with that of Jairus' daughter (see ver. 25); and again the story of the son of the

Shunammite woman who, according to 2 Kings iv. 18, "was grown," probably contributed to the determination of this age (comp. Luke ii. 42).

43. *And he charged them straitly that no man should know it:* it was with this view that he had admitted only his most confidential followers (ver. 37), and had driven out the crowd of mourners.

#### CHAPTER vi.

Verses 1—6 = Matt. xiii. 54—58 = Luke iv. 16—30.

1. *Into his own country*, should be "into his own city." The second journey of Jesus (comp. iv. 35); this time to the west (Nazareth).

2. *What wisdom, &c.*: better, "What kind of wisdom is this which is given unto him, and what are such mighty works that are wrought by his hands?"

3. *The carpenter, the son of Mary*: the mother is mentioned because the father was dead, and Jesus had succeeded to him as "the carpenter" until he exchanged his homely manual labour for the calling of a public teacher.

4. *In his own country*, should be "in his own city."

5. *Sick folk*, who were easy to heal. See note on Matt. iv. 24.

Verses 7—13 = Matt. x. 1—14 = Luke ix. 1—6.

7. *By two and two*: they are sent out thus in order that they may find strength and encouragement in pursuing their calling in company. Perhaps also after Deut. xix. 5.

8. *Save a staff only*: mitigation of Matt. x. 10 = Luke ix. 3.

9. *Sandals*, strictly, "light sandals," [*dimin.* of the ordinary word for sandals]. This is also a mitigation of the other account, though, strictly speaking, it is only taking an extra pair of shoes, in addition to those which the traveller wore upon his feet, that appears to be forbidden in Matt. x. 10; comp. the expression in Luke ix. 3.

13. *Oil*: used in ancient times as a panacea. This combination of physical and spiritual remedies appears also in James v. 14.

Verses 14—16 = Matt. xiv. 1, 2 = Luke ix. 7—9.

14. The interval until the return (ver. 30) of the disciples who have been sent out is employed in giving an account of the



increasing fame of Jesus which this very mission caused, and in portraying the thoughts about him which occupied the evil conscience in the royal fortress at Tiberias.

15. The people, too, now attempt to form some opinion about him. He is regarded as either the actual forerunner of the Messiah who had been foretold, or at least as "a prophet, as one of the prophets" (comp. Luke ix. 8). (The word *or* should be omitted.) In either case, the period without prophets, which was usually supposed to have begun when Malachi ceased to speak (comp. 1 Macc. iv. 46, ix. 27, xiv. 41), is regarded as now closed, and a period of new revelations as having begun.

Verses 17—29 = Matt. xiv. 3—12.

19. Only in Mark, but assumed in Matt. xiv. 9. The Old Testament type is the wicked Jezebel who swears to kill Elijah (1 Kings xix. 1, 2), and incites Ahab to murder Naboth (1 Kings xxi. 5—10).

20. [*Observed him*: Luther correctly renders the Greek, "kept him safely," which Holzmann leaves without comment. It may either mean "kept him in safe custody," or "kept him safe from Herodias' vengeance."]—*Did many things*: According to another reading, he was perplexed and penitent whenever he had heard the pious man.

23. The Old Testament type is found in Esther v. 2, 3, 6, vii. 2, where the king, "at the banquet of wine," swears to Esther, after she has "obtained favour in his sight," that he will give her whatever she demands, "even to the half of the kingdom." The historical Antipas was no king at all, but a tetrarch (see note on Luke iii. 1), and had not much to divide.

25. *By and by*: i.e. "at once," "immediately."

Verses 30—44 = Matt. xiv. 13—21 = Luke ix. 10—17.

31. The disciples must have rest, and Jesus desires to be alone with them now that they have returned from their first mission. This same journey to Bethsaida has another reason assigned for it in Matt. xiv. There (ver. 12) the disciples of John, who bury their master's body (Mark vi. 29), are confused with the disciples of Jesus, who tell him all about the mission they were sent upon (Mark vi. 30), and in ver. 13 it appears as if Jesus had withdrawn

because he was frightened by the news of the Baptist's death.—*Apart*, should be "alone."

32. *Privately*, should be "alone."

34 = Matt. ix. 36.

36. *Into the country round about and into the villages*, means strictly into the farmsteads and small villages. There were no larger places in the immediate neighbourhood.

37. *Two hundred pennyworth*: The pence here are denarii, one of which (= 6d.) was at that time a day's wages, whereas in this case twenty-five men would have had to live on it. Thus on the lowest estimate a very considerable sum for that time was required, an amount altogether unattainable by the disciples.

39. *By companies*: i.e. in regular separate companies, such as might sit at table together, which were distributed according to the different spots from which the provisions were given out. See note on Matt. xiv. 18.—*Upon the green grass*, i.e. on the lonely grassy marsh-lands east of the point where the Jordan flows into the lake.

41. Here the relation of this account to that of the Supper (see note on Matt. xiv. 19) which follows (xiv. 22) is particularly plain, especially as the disciples appear to fill exactly the position of the deacons in Justin Martyr's account of the earliest mode of celebrating the Christian love feasts.

Verses 45—52 = Matt. xiv. 22—33.

45. *Bethsaida*: English "Fisherhouse," the ancient fishing village to the left of the point where the Jordan enters the lake (see note on Matt. xi. 21, xiv. 13) at the foot of a hill on which the tetrarch Philip had built the city of Julias, the ruins of which still look down upon the lake. Jesus comes to the same place after the second feeding (viii. 22). As the disciples are to cross over from here, the true reading would seem to be preserved in old Latin MSS., which have "from Bethsaida" or "to opposite Bethsaida." Even Josephus knows only one place of this name, though he usually calls it Julias. As to the theory that there was a second Bethsaida on the western shore, supposed to be distinguished from this place because it is called the "Galilean" Bethsaida, while this is Gaulanitish, see John i. 44, xii. 21.

48, 49. The unhistorical character of the narrative is betrayed



by the fact that the whole object in view is evidently a mere display of miraculous powers. This is the very opposite to Matt. iv. 6, 7.

51. *And the wind ceased*: The words are the same as in the first narrative of the stilling of the sea (iv. 39), of which the present is only a second edition.

52. Only in Mark. *They considered not the miracle of*: "they had not gained understanding by."

Verses 53—56 = Matt. xiv. 34—36.

## CHAPTER vii.

Verses 1—23 = Matt. xv. 1—20.

3, 4. Only in Mark.

4. *Tables*, should be "benches."

11. *A gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me*: i.e. "Let that by which thou mightest have derived advantage from me be offered as a sacrifice."—*Corban*: i.e. "sacrifice," was the usual expression for anything to be bestowed upon the temple. The son in using it expressly declared to his parents that everything that might be beneficial to them, over and above his own requirements, was intended as a sacrifice for the temple (Prov. xxviii. 24).

14. After the breach with the ruling party and their principles, Jesus calls upon the people.

15. Waiving the special question of meats, Jesus points out that at the foundation of the law itself lies the thought, that it is only what comes out of a man, issues of various kinds, the discharge of lepers, corrupt matter, that defiles him. At the same time, according to ver. 17, he is uttering a "parable," inasmuch as he finds here the higher meaning, that nothing that comes to a man from without can defile him, but only that which he as a moral being makes, as it were, out of himself and outwardly presents.

17. *Into the house*: He is again in Capernaum, but only temporarily. See p. 40.

19. *Purging all meats*: properly, "which makes clean all meats," i.e. which performs of itself the purification on which the Pharisees bestowed so much pains.

Verses 24—30 = Matt. xv. 21—28.

26. *Syrophœnician*: Syrophœnicia was the Phœnicia which belonged to the Roman province of Syria, as distinguished from Libophœnicia.

27. *First*: after Rom. i. 16; mitigation of the speech in Matt. xv. 26.

31 = Matt. xv. 29. This is the longest journey which Jesus takes, especially if, instead of *from the borders of Tyre and Sidon*, we read, "from the borders of Tyre through Sidon." If we accept the latter reading, he must first have gone northwards, then from Sidon by the road over Lebanon to Damascus, which according to Pliny was one of the "ten cities" (see note on Matt. iv. 25), and then returned from the east to the Sea of Galilee.

Verses 32—37. Only in Mark.

32. *Had an impediment in his speech*: "was dumb."

33. On the spittle, see note on viii. 23. Other similar narratives are also in the mind of the writer, as for example that of Elijah (1 Kings xvii. 19—21) and of Elisha (2 Kings iv. 33—35).

34. *Ephphatha*: Aramaic, given as if it were a magic word. See note on ix. 25.

35. After Isaiah xxix. 18, xxxv. 5, 6.

#### CHAPTER viii.

Verses 1—10 = Matt. xv. 32—39.

7. *Blessed*: "gave thanks." [Better, "offered a blessing."]

10. *Dalmanutha* is otherwise unknown. It is here practically the same as Magdala, which is mentioned in Matt. xv. 39. There is a similar crossing over after the first feeding in vi. 45.

Verses 11, 12 = Matt. xvi. 1—4.

12. See note on Matt. xii. 39.

Verses 13—21 = Matt. xvi. 4—12.

14. According to this, the conversation took place in the ship; and not, as Matt. has it, xvi. 5, after their arrival at the opposite shore.

15. They remain a very short time (comp. ver. 10) on the western shore, the seat of the spiritual guides of the people, the Pharisees, and of the temporal prince who had combined with



them against Jesus (iii. 6); and when they have left it again, Jesus in displeasure speaks against both of these; but the disciples in crass misunderstanding refer his words to the fact that they have not enough bread to suffice for their stay upon the desert eastern shore.

18. Only in Mark.

19, 20. The disciples must have no anxiety at all about material means of subsistence. In support of this demand upon them, Jesus reminds them of two practical demonstrations of the words in Matt. iv. 4.

Verses 22—26. Only in Mark.

23. Spittle was regarded by the ancients generally as a remedy. According to Tacitus and Suetonius, Vespasian cured a blind man in Alexandria by means of spittle. Our narrative stands on a level with theirs in regard to its historical obscurity. Anyhow, making the blind to see was foretold in the passage in Isaiah (Is. xxxv. 5) which proved so rich in its consequences (see note on Matt. xi. 5). Hence Jesus appears again in Rev. iii. 17, 18, as an eye-doctor. In the present narrative of Mark, there is evident reference to the spiritual power of vision which has been mentioned in ver. 18.

24. *As trees*: i.e. so indistinctly. Hence it appears that we are not dealing with a man born blind. His restored senses are not yet clear.

25. [*Made him look up*: The Greek word here employed is used both of "looking up" and of "looking again," or "seeing again," and is even found with the special sense of "recovering one's sight." Luther has, "Bid him look again."]—This is a unique example of a healing which does not take place immediately, but goes through a certain course.

Verses 27—38 = Matt. xvi. 13—27 = Luke ix. 18—26.

32. *And he spake that saying openly*: better, "And he spoke this out plainly," i.e. no longer in mere hints and mysterious forebodings, as in ii. 19.

33. *Savourest not*: "thinkest not."

34. We can hardly imagine that what follows was a popular address, such as might have been delivered in one of the villages mentioned in ver. 27. The two other Evangelists only distinguish

it from what precedes as addressed to all the disciples, while the preceding words applied to Peter alone.

38 = Matt. x. 33.

#### CHAPTER ix.

Verse 1 = Matt. xvi. 28 = Luke ix. 27.

The form of expression occupies an intermediate position between the original account of the first and the general character of the expression found in the third Evangelist.

Verses 2—9 = Matt. xvii. 1—9 = Luke ix. 28—36.

3. *As snow*: The snow-clad landscape of Hermon in winter (see note on Matt. xvi. 13) forms the background of the picture. Comp. Rev. i. 14.

6. *He wist not what to say*: "he knew not what he said."—The explanation of how Peter could suppose that these marvellous forms needed earthly dwellings.

Verses 10—13 = Matt. xvii. 10—13.

10. Only in Mark.

12. *And how it is written . . . set at nought*, should be, "And how is it then written of the Son of Man that he must suffer much and be despised?" If the forerunner has already restored all things to order, how can a lot await the Messiah himself, which depends upon the very opposite supposition?

13. The one thing that is undisturbed is the connection between the lot of the forerunner and that of the Messiah foreseen in the Scriptures. According to the view taken here, Jesus had already recognized both the fall of the forerunner (perhaps 1 Kings xvii.—xix.) and that of the Messiah himself (perhaps Is. liii.) as founded on Scripture. In any case, the lines are here indicated along which the scriptural exegesis of the earliest community moved, with a view to recovering the peace of mind which had been destroyed by this most unexpected issue of events.

Verses 14—29 = Matt. xvii. 14—21 = Luke ix. 37—43.

14. The picture which the Evangelist gives of the actual facts before him is affected by the Old Testament type of this story in which the assistants appear waiting below (Exod. xxiv. 14) and occasionally manifesting their own incapacity (Exod. xxxii. 19).



Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, also served as an example of a similar experience (2 Kings iv. 29—32).

15. *Were greatly amazed*: as they were at Moses when he was transfigured, Exod. xxxiv. 30.

17. *A dumb spirit*: The sickness, which appears from what follows evidently to have been epilepsy, was accompanied by dumbness.

18. *Pineth away*: he wastes away.

19. Type in Numb. xiv. 27.

21, 23, 24. Only in Mark.

23. This verse should read, "Jesus said unto him, If thou canst! He that believeth can do all things."—Jesus corrects in the first place the doubt which the father has expressed in the words, "If thou canst."

24. *Help thou mine unbelief*: in case, that is to say, my belief, when tried by thy standard, should still appear as unbelief.

25. *Thou dumb and deaf spirit*: Persons so possessed were considered especially difficult to heal, as not accessible by any mode of address. Comp. vii. 34. So also in Ps. lviii. 5, 6, a deaf adder is spoken of which has stopped its ear and listens not to the voice of the charmer.

26, 27. Only in Mark. The evil spirit is compelled to depart, but appears to desire first to vent all its rage once more upon the sufferer.

29. *And fasting*: a later addition from Matt. xvii. 21.

30. *Passed*: strictly "passed by." From the Roman territory (comp. note on Matt. xvi. 23), to which he has withdrawn, Jesus proceeds into Galilee, but only that he may pass through it quickly and as secretly as possible. His goal is Jerusalem and death.

32. *Were afraid*: having a presentiment of some evil.

Verses 33—37 = Matt. xviii. 1—5 = Luke ix. 46—48.

34. *Should be*: "was."

36. *Taken him in his arms*: a sign of that disposition towards children which is demanded in ver. 37.

37 = Matt. x. 40.

Verses 38—41 = Luke ix. 49, 50.

38. See note on Matt. iv. 24.

39. Comp. 1 Cor. xii. 3.

40. Obverse of Matt. xii. 30 = Luke xi. 23, where the context is different.

41 = Matt. x. 41, 42. Here the verse is a continuation of the expression in ver. 39 of the value which is to be attached to the very smallest amount of friendliness.

Verses 42—48 = Matt. xviii. 6—9.

42. The "little ones that believe in me," in the connection in which we find them here, are beginners in the faith, like the worker of miracles in ver. 38. They are to be attracted, not repulsed. On the other hand, in the connection in which they are introduced in Matt. xviii. 6, they have become literally children.

44, 46, 48. From Is. lxvi. 24.

Verses 49, 50.

49. Only in Mark.—Every one must be salted with fire. Fire has a painful, but at the same time a purifying effect; salt a caustic, but at the same time invigorating one. Thus we have two symbols for that which gives pain to a man, but at the same time makes him a sacrifice well pleasing to God. Hence the reference to Levit. ii. 13, "Neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat-offering: with all thine offerings shalt thou offer salt." By the salting which preserves it from corruption, the sacrifice has been made a symbol of man, who either offers himself voluntarily, by some violent self-renunciation such as is prescribed in the commandments of vv. 43, 45, 47, or else is consumed by the fire of hell as an atoning sacrifice for his sins, vv. 44, 46, 48. Commentators waver between the two possible explanations.

50. Comp. Matt. v. 13 = Luke xiv. 34. The concluding words, which are peculiar to the second Evangelist, remind us of Col. iv. 6, and of the occasion (ver. 34) which gives rise to the whole series of sayings.

## CHAPTER X.

Verses 1—11 = Matt. xix. 1—9.

1. *Into the coasts* [i.e. borders] of Judæa: The original text here has "and," so as to read "and beyond Jordan." They go in the first place to Peræa. Comp. note on xi. 1.

2. *Tempting him*: Because Jesus is placed in such a position



that he must contradict either Moses (Deut. xxiv. 1) or himself. There is a different account in Matt. xix. 3.

3, 10. Only in Mark.

12. Only in Mark. Application of the same rule to a case which never occurred among the Jews, but was the more common among the Gentiles. Comp. 1 Cor. vii. 10.

Verses 13—16 = Matt. xix. 13—15 = Luke xviii. 15—17.

15. *As a little child*: with such a disposition and temper, so unpretending and trustful.

Verses 17—27 = Matt. xix. 16—26 = Luke xviii. 18—27.

17. *When he was gone forth into the way*: Either the departure into Peræa, which is mentioned in ver. 1, is now actually entered upon, after his opponents have made a last attempt (2—12) and his friends have brought their children to him to take leave (13—16), or else the conversation with the Pharisees takes place as he enters Judea, the blessing of the children at his first resting-place, and the encounter here spoken of as he is leaving it again, after which Jesus is again upon the highway (32) and then (46) in Jericho.

18. Jesus rejects the excessive reverence that is paid him by gesture and address, as due to God alone, of whom alone we can say that He is good, while among men we can only speak of *becoming* good. So also Luke xviii. 19, but Matt. xix. 17 has it differently.

19. *Defraud not*: properly, “withhold not wages;” an addition based upon Exod. xxi. 10, Deut. xxiv. 14.

21. *Loved him*: comp. note on Matt. xix. 21.

Verses 28—31 = Matt. xix. 27—30 = Luke xviii. 28—30.

29. *Or wife*: is wanting in many of the old manuscripts. It seemed from ver. 30 to be out of place.

30. *With persecutions*: as a necessary accompaniment disturbing their happiness in this world.

Verses 32—34 = Matt. xx. 17—19 = Luke xviii. 31—34.

32. *They were amazed*: “they were terrified,” when they saw how he was actually taking the road to the capital where he himself had foretold that he should perish.

Verses 35—45 = Matt. xx. 20—28 = Luke xxii. 24—27.

42. Comp. Matt. xx. 25. The rulers among the Gentiles maintain their position only by making the wishes and interests of others subservient to their own wishes and interests. So also in Luke xxii. 25, where the addition is made that they also cause themselves to be addressed as “benefactors,” a customary title of respect in ancient times.

Verses 46—52 = Matt. xx. 29—34 = Luke xviii. = 35—43.

46. *Bartimæus*: Aramaic, meaning simply “son of Timæus.”

50. Only in Mark.—*Garment*: strictly, “cloak.”

51. *Lord*: here “Rabbuni,” instead of “Rabbi” as in ix. 5, = “great Master.”

#### CHAPTER xi.

Verses 1—11 = Matt. xxi. 1—11 = Luke xix. 28—38.

1. *Bethphage and Bethany*: the latter name serves to define the former more exactly. Travelling from Jericho, they would first come to Bethany, a mile and three quarters (English) from Jerusalem (John xi. 18) on the south-east slope of the Mount of Olives; then, turning the corner, they would reach Bethphage, whence Jerusalem appeared in sight. Comp. note on Matt. xxi. 1.

2. *Into the village*: i.e. the village of Bethany last mentioned.—*A colt*, may be either a horse or an ass.—*Whereon never man sat*: fit therefore for a sacred purpose; see Numb. xix. 2; Deut. xxi. 3; 2 Sam. vi. 3.—In all three respects Luke xix. 30 agrees with Mark, while Matt. xxi. 2 differs from them.

3. *And straightway he will send him hither*: the oldest text has, “and will send him back hither at once.” Jesus promises the owner, who was no doubt known to him, that he will send the colt back to him very shortly. Different in Matt. xxi. 3.

4. *Where two ways met*: i.e. where the way into the farm-yard led out of the highway.

8. *Branches*: strictly “litter;” here small branches and sprays.

10. Only in Mark. With the representative of God comes also the Messianic kingdom.

11. End of the first day in Jerusalem, according to the second Gospel. Different in Matt. xxi. 17.

Verses 12—14 = Matt. xxi. 18, 19.

12. [*When they were come from*: strictly, “when they had gone out from.”]



13. As the fruit appears on the fig-tree before the leaves, this tree being full of leaves seemed to promise figs already.—*The time of figs was not yet*: the proper summer fig (karmouse) does not ripen until August, the early fig (biccurah) not until June. We cannot suppose that late or autumn figs which had hung through the winter are here meant, as the fact that the tree had leaves on would have nothing to do with them. In the neighbourhood of the Sea of Galilee the season for figs lasted (according to Josephus) for ten months, and it was from that part of the country that Jesus derived his expectations.

Verses 15—19 = Matt. xxi. 12—17 = Luke xix. 45—48.

16. Only in Mark. The forecourt of the temple was wrongly used as a thoroughfare, as appears from the carrying of household utensils through it, in order to save the trouble of some more circuitous route.

17. Only in Mark.—*Of all nations the house of prayer*, should be “a house of prayer for all nations” (Is. lvi. 7).

19. End of second day, according to the second Evangelist.

Verses 20—24 = Matt. xxi. 20—22.

20. After Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36.

21. Only in Mark.

Verses 25, 26 = Matt. vi. 14, 15.

The connection with what precedes is as follows: the wish that Jesus had uttered in perfect confidence in God was a curse; but it does not therefore follow that we, in like faith that our prayers will be heard, may curse those who have done us ill.

Verses 27—33 = Matt. xxi. 23—27 = Luke xx. 1—8.

28. *Doest thou these things?* The last thing that Jesus had done was to make the attack upon the proceedings in the temple (vv. 15, 16) at which the priests had been enraged the day before (ver. 18.) He must tell them whence he derives his official authority for this, and show them his commission. Different in Matt. xxi. 23, and different again in Luke xx. 2.

## CHAPTER xii.

Verses 1—12 = Matt. xxi. 33—46 = Luke xx. 9—19.

2—5. The three servants represent the long series of prophets,

one after another of whom appears upon the scene, but with more and more disastrous results.

Verses 13—17 = Matt. xxii. 15—22 = Luke xx. 20—26.

Verses 18—27 = Matt. xxii. 23—33 = Luke xx. 27—38.

26. *In the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him:* "In the book of Moses, in the bush, how God spake unto him." "In the bush," means in the passage about the burning bush, Exod. iii. 2—4, and especially iii. 6. This was the ancient manner in which particular passages of Scripture, which was not yet divided into chapters and verses, were referred to.

Verses 28—34 = Matt. xxii. 34—40 = Luke xx. 39, 40.

28. In Matt. xxii. 35, he asks in a very different spirit.

29. Only in Mark, from Deut. vi. 4; the great confession of faith of Israel (Shma).

32—34. Only in Mark.

Verses 35—37 = Matt. xxii. 41—46 = Luke xx. 41—44.

36. *By the Holy Ghost:* i.e. as a prophet. Comp. Acts ii. 30.

37. An enigma which has been carelessly passed over by the prevailing school of biblical learning.

Verses 38—40 = Matt. xxiii. 1, 6, 7, 14 = Luke xx. 45—47.

Verses 41—44 = Luke xxi. 1—4.

41. *The treasury*, which consisted of thirteen boxes, placed in the forecourt of the women, was intended for small contributions to the temple, as well as for the legal temple-tax. From this source the priesthood derived enormous wealth.

42. *Two mites:* rather less than a farthing, see note on Matt. v. 26. Smaller sums might not be put in.

#### CHAPTER xiii.

Verses 1—37 = Matt. xxiv. 1—42 = Luke xxi. 5—36.

1. *What manner of stones:* white, shining blocks of marble piled one upon another, as if for a fortress.

9 = Matt. x. 17, 18.—[*They shall deliver you up to councils, and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten:* "They shall deliver you up to councils and synagogues; ye shall be beaten," &c.]

11—13 = Matt. x. 19—22.

28. *Is yet tender:* "becomes juicy." [Strictly, "has become soft to the touch."]



33, 34. Only in Mark.

35. See note on Matt. xiv. 25.

36, 37. Only in Mark.

37. See note on Luke xii. 41.

#### CHAPTER xiv.

Verses 1, 2 = Matt. xxvi. 1—5 = Luke xxii. 1, 2.

Verses 3—9 = Matt. xxvi. 6—13 = Luke vii. 36—50.

3. *Box*, should be “bottle.”—[*Spikenard*: The Greek is “pure nard” (or as some take it, “liquid nard.”)]—*She brake the box*, properly, “the bottle;” i.e. she broke the neck of the bottle that she might pour out unsparingly the whole contents, and at the same time prevent the vessel which was thus consecrated from being used again.

5. *Pence*: i.e. “denarii.”—*They murmured against her*: lit. “they set upon her.”

Verses 10, 11 = Matt. xxvi. 14—16 = Luke xxii. 3—6.

11. *Conveniently*: strictly “at a convenient time.”

Verses 12—16 = Matt. xxvi. 17—19 = Luke xxii. 7—13.

13. Legendary development of details originating in 1 Sam. x. 2, 3, 5, and perhaps Gen. xxiv. 14. It assumes the belief in supernatural knowledge.

15. *Furnished*: strictly “furnished with cushions.”

Verses 17—25 = Matt. xxvi. 20—29 = Luke xxii. 14—23.

22. *Blessed*: “gave thanks.”

23. *They all drank of it*: The cup was passed from hand to hand, whereas Jesus had divided the bread amongst them himself.

24. *New Testament*, should be “covenant.”

Verses 26—31 = Matt. xxvi. 30—35 = Luke xxii. 33, 34.

30. *Twice*: The night-watch of “cock-crow” (xiii. 35) lasted from the first to the second cock-crow, i.e. through the first three hours after midnight. Some of the old MSS. omit the word “twice,” and all the expressions referring to it in vv. 68, 72, are also of doubtful authority.

Verses 32—42 = Matt. xxvi. 36—46 = Luke xxii. 39—46.

33. *To be sore amazed*: “to tremble.” [“To be seized with horror, or anguish,” De Wette.]

35. *The hour*: the time of abuse and death which was approaching.

36. *Abba*: Aramaic; in English, "Father." From the lips of Jesus (see note on Matt. vi. 9—13) this name of God had come into daily use among Christians. Hence we find it in Rom. viii. 15, Gal. iv. 6, with the addition "Father," just as if it were a proper name.

41. *The hour*: which he had prayed might be averted in ver. 35.

Verses 43—50 Matt. xxvi. 47—56 = Luke xxii. 47—53.

43. *One of the twelve*: emphasized because it is the fulfilment of ver. 20. There only the second Evangelist has these words, but here they are given by the two others also.

49. *But the Scriptures must be fulfilled*: "But that the Scripture may be fulfilled."

Verses 51, 52. Only in Mark.

When the company broke up late in the evening, a young man of the house where Jesus had kept the passover had wakened up out of his sleep, wrapped a linen cloth round him, and followed them. Hence he nearly fell into the hands of the captors (who, moreover, are not described as young men in the older MSS., but simply spoken of as "they"). On his flight, comp. Amos ii. 16.

51. *Young men*, should be "they."

Verses 53—65 = Matt. xxvi. 57—68 = Luke xxii. 54, 55, 63—71.

54. *Warmed himself*: explanation in John xviii. 18.

56. *Agreed not together*: as it must do according to Deut. xvii. 6, xix. 15. Comp. Sus. 51—61.

58. *Made with hands . . . made without hands*: These words, which go beyond what is said in Matt. xxvi. 61, are intended to convey the meaning really contained in the saying on which the accusation brought against Jesus was based; they make it amount almost to what is said in John iv. 21, 23, inasmuch as it promises a new divine community in place of the temple worshippers. See the development of this idea, 1 Cor. iii. 9, 16, 17, vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Apoc. vii. 48, xvii. 24.

59. *Neither so*: The more exact definitions of the general statement contradicted each other, and indeed to this day we do not know what Jesus actually said about this.



60. *Stood up in the midst*, should be “stepped into the midst of them.”

61. *The Blessed*: standing epithet of God according to the later Jewish usage.

65. *Prophecy*: i.e. prophesy who struck thee; Matt. xxvi. 68 = Luke xxii. 64.

Verses 66—72 = Matt. xxvi. 69—75 = Luke xxii. 56—62.

68. *The porch*: “the courtyard” outside the great gate.

69. *A maid*: “the maid.”

70. *And thy speech agreeth thereto*: not in the oldest MSS.

#### CHAPTER XV.

Verses 1—19 = Matt. xxvii. 1—30 = Luke xxiii. 1—25.

1 = Matt. xxvii. 1, 2 = Luke xxiii. 1.—*Held a consultation*: three old MSS. read, “they prepared a deliberation,” which accurately expresses the exact form which still required to be fulfilled in the final sitting.

2—5 = Matt. xxvii. 11—14 = Luke xxiii. 3.

3. [*But he answered nothing*: Luth. omits these words, which are not found in the oldest MSS.]

6. [*At that feast*: see note on Matt. xxvii. 15. The Greek phrase is the same in both passages.]

8. Only in Mark. The people who now approached, and not Pilate (see note on Matt. xxvii. 17), raised the question of mercy. [Luther renders this verse, “And the people went up, and begged him to do as he was accustomed to do.”]

9. A sad and fatal mingling of mockery and pity. The people could not put up with a Messiah and King standing senseless in chains.

11. The priests give the cue, “Barabbas,” a name which was well received by the people. See note on Matt. xxvii. 16.

16. *The hall called prætorium*: the courtyard of the judgment-hall.

Verses 20, 21 = Matt. xxvii. 31, 32 = Luke xxiii. 26.

21. *Alexander and Rufus* (comp. Rom. xvi. 13) were Christians well known to the readers of the second Gospel.

Verses 22—32 = Matt. xxvii. 33—44 = Luke xxiii. 32—38.

23. *Myrrh*: resinous sap of a shrub, having an aromatic taste.

25. At nine o'clock in the morning.

28. This verse, referring to Is. liii. 12, is not genuine here. It has been inserted from Luke xxii. 37.

Verses 33—38 = Matt. xxvii. 45—53 = Luke xxiv. 44—46.

Verses 39—47 = Matt. xxvii. 54—61 = Luke xxiii. 47—56.

39. *That he so cried out*: whereas usually those who were crucified wrestled at least for a day with death, while their dying cries became weaker and weaker. This powerful cry and sudden death seem to the Gentile worthy of a son of the gods.

40. *James the less*: so called in distinction from celebrities of the same name.

42. *The preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath*: That this Friday, being the 15th of Nisan, was at the same time a high festival, and like a Sabbath (Exod. xii. 16, Levit. xxiii. 7) a day on which such proceedings as those in which the Jews have so far been engaged could not properly take place, does not appear to be considered. The sanctity of the day is eclipsed by that of the Sabbath proper, and moreover the execution of a blasphemer might be regarded as an act of worship (John xvi. 2); according to Numb. xxv. 4, Deut. xxi. 22, 23, 2 Sam. xxi. 9, he was "hung up unto the Lord, in the face of the sun."

43. *Counsellor*: member of the high council.—*Also*: comp. Luke ii. 25, 38.

44. Only in Mark.—*Any while*: i.e. whether he had died sooner than might have been expected. See note on ver. 39.

47. *Mary the mother of Joses*: In ver. 40, she is mentioned with the names of both her sons; in xvi. 1, with the name of the other only.

#### CHAPTER xvi.

Verses 1—8 = Matt. xxviii. 1—8 = Luke xxiv. 1—10.

1. *Had bought*: "bought."

3. Only in Mark.

Verses 9—20.

The spuriousness of this passage, which is not found in the oldest MSS., is universally acknowledged, and was declared even by some of the Fathers. The whole of it is a meagre abstract taken from the other three Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles.

9. From John xx. 1, 14—17, Luke viii. 2.



10. From John xx. 18, Luke xxiv. 10.
11. From Luke xxiv. 11, 17.
12. From Luke xxiv. 13—31.
13. From Luke xxiv. 33—35, 41.
14. From Matt. xxviii. 17; Luke xxiv. 25, 36—43; John xx. 27.
- 15, 16. From Matt. xxviii. 19; Luke xxiv. 47.
17. From Acts ii. 4, x. 46, xvi. 18, xix. 6, 15; Luke x. 19.
18. From Acts xxviii. 3—9.—*It shall not hurt them*: Papias relates this of Justus Barsabas (Acts i. 23).

19, 20. From Matt. xxviii. 20; Luke xxiv. 48, 51; Acts i. 8, 9.

In place of these last twelve verses, some of the old MSS. have the following shorter conclusion: "But all that was committed to them, they (the women, ver. 8) announced to Peter and those that were with him. But afterwards Jesus himself also sent forth by them the holy and imperishable preaching of eternal blessedness from the east even unto the west."

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE.

### CHAPTER i.

1—4. Commonly called the prologue or introduction.

1. *To set forth in order*, &c., should be “to write down an account of those things which have been fulfilled among us.”—*Many*: see p. 39.

2. *The beginning*: Here, the beginning spoken of in the note on Mark i. 1. This verse speaks of the sources and authorities of all evangelical and apostolic tradition. These are partly eye-witnesses of the life of Jesus from the baptism by John, partly “ministers of the word,” the assistants of the apostles, such as Mark, Luke, Philip the Evangelist. Contributions from all these, either written or oral, were employed in the composition of our Gospels.

3. *To me also*: Others had preceded him in our first two Gospels.—*Having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first*, should be “After I had diligently inquired into everything from the very beginning.”—“The very beginning,” goes beyond “the beginning” in ver. 2, inasmuch as Luke collected the traditions of the birth and childhood of Jesus, and even of John the Baptist.—*Theophilus*: see p. 48. From the manner in which he is here addressed (see Acts xxiii. 26), a man of some distinction.

4. See pp. 37 sq.

5. One of the peculiarities of growing legends is, that the later the point of time at which our informants stand, and the more impossible it is for them to have any information beyond that already given, the more they appear to know. Mark begins with John the Baptist; Matthew, with the birth of Jesus; Luke goes back to the birth of John the Baptist, which was six months before that of Jesus (vv. 26, 36). In contradiction to ii. 1, 2, the birth of Jesus is here placed in the days of Herod. As this



occurs also in Matt. ii. 1, it affords the safest statement, comparatively speaking, as to the date of the birth of Jesus.—*Of the course of Abia*: the eighth of the twenty-four classes of priests which performed in turn the temple services.—*Elisabeth*: the name, according to Exod. vi. 23, of Aaron's wife; while Mary is the same name as Miriam, which, according to Exod. xv. 20, was the name of his sister.

7. Old Testament type in Gen. xviii. 11.

9. The classes served week by week, but the individual duties, and so especially the honour of offering incense, changed from day to day.

10. Contemporary picture of public worship. While the offering of incense took place morning and evening in the interior of the sanctuary, silent prayer was offered in the forecourts of the temple.

13. *Thy prayer*: It is assumed that he was praying either for offspring for himself, or for the Messianic salvation of the people.—*John*: The name means "pleasing to God." Old Testament type, Gen. xvi. 11, xvii. 19.

15. Description of a Nazirite, after Numb. vi. 2 sq., 1 Sam. i. 11. The substance of the verse is expressed in the very words of Judges xiii. 4, 7, 14, where Samson's mother before his birth is commanded by the angel to abstain from wine and strong drink, "for the boy shall be a Nazirite from the womb." Moreover, Samson's birth was as improbable as that of John, and was announced beforehand by heavenly messengers. See note on Matt. ii. 23.

17. Description of the calling of the Baptist in the words of the prophet Malachi, which were first applied to him by Jesus (Matt. xi. 10). In these words the prophet proclaims at the end of history a great manifestation of God, and as a preparation for it the re-appearance of the prophet Elijah. See Mal. iii. 1, iv. 5, 6 (in the Heb., iii. 1, 23, 24).

18. Imitation of Gen. xv. 8, xvii. 17, xviii. 12.

19. *Gabriel*: in English, "Man of God," as the angel is called in Judges xiii. 6, 8, who announces beforehand the birth of Samson. But it is not until after the Persian era that we find the seven angel-princes who stand around the throne of God, each with his proper name (Dan. viii. 16, ix. 21).

20. So Daniel is struck dumb by the appearance of an angel (Dan. x. 15 sq.). The Jew of the age in which our introductory narratives originated, lived in the sacred books, and he involuntarily represented all his ideas in their colours. Comp. pp. 37 sq.

21. *That* should be "when."

25. *Looked on me* should be "hath deigned."—Elizabeth is ashamed, and at the same time takes comfort, inasmuch as this will suffice to obliterate the disgrace which, according to Jewish ideas, was attached to barrenness.

26. In opposition to the first Gospel (see note on Matt. ii. 5), the third regards Nazareth, the historical birthplace (see note on Matt. ii. 23), as the home of Mary from the first. Its task is, therefore, to bring her for a time to Bethlehem, which is done in ii. 1 sqq. First, however, this version of the introductory narrative brings the two mothers of the two great ones of Israel into personal contact, corresponding to the later relation of their sons, and serving as a type of it (see note on ver. 43).

27. *Espoused*, should be "betrothed."—*Of the house of David*: refers even here to Joseph. Comp. Luke ii. 4, iii. 23, 31. The introductory narratives are indifferent as to Mary's genealogy, although, on the supposition that Jesus had no human father, everything would depend upon it.

28. *Highly favoured*: blessed by the favour of God. From this verse is taken the first part of the angelic salutation, as it is called, of Catholic devotion (*Salutatio angelica*, *Ave Maria*).

31. Here the name is announced beforehand to the mother; in Matt. i. 21, to the father. The most important change which has taken place in regard to this part of the introductory narrative, in the course of its development, is that the event which is about to occur is foretold, not to Joseph, but to Mary, whereby the whole affair is made more inoffensive.

32. A genuine Jewish view of the Messiah and Messianic salvation.

33. Eternity of the Messianic rule, after Micah iv. 7, Daniel vii. 14. Different in Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 24—28.

35. *The Holy Ghost* is often spoken of in the translation of the Gospels, where in the original we find simply "holy spirit" in an impersonal sense, equivalent to the "power of the Highest" in the second clause, which will "overshadow" Mary, as in Exod.



xl. 34, Numb. ix. 15, 1 Kings viii. 10, Is. vi. 4, every appearance of God upon the earth is enveloped in a cloud. This Spirit of God is, moreover, thought of as a power which is the medium of God's influence upon the world, like "the Word" in the fourth Gospel (John i. 3). This verse contains accordingly the precise theory of that fatherless conception of Jesus which we find mentioned also in the introductory chapters of Matthew's Gospel. Here is the climax of what has been said in the Old Testament of the birth of Isaac, Samson and Samuel, and in our introductory history (following such types) of the birth of John. If in the birth of late-born children, such as Isaac, the divine creating power has had the chief share (Rom. iv. 17 sqq.), here it does all. So far, indeed, the Jewish idea of God, which was altogether inconsistent with an actual natural parental relation, had resisted any development of this kind. But the Gentile world was very familiar with "sons of the gods" in a grosser sense than that of Judaism (see note on Matt. ii. 15), and found them, indeed, even in historical characters, as, for instance, Pythagoras, Plato, Alexander, Augustus. This idea was adopted as soon as Christianity had begun to settle in Greek circles, while at the same time the coarser and more material elements involved in it were removed.

36. *Cousin* should be "kinswoman." This relationship between Jesus and John is altogether foreign to actual history, and even to the representation of the fourth Gospel (John i. 31, 33).

39. *Into the hill country*: So Samuel's parents, according to 1 Sam. i. 1, dwelt on Mount Ephraim.—*A city of Judah*: Some city or other in Judea, but not the city of Jutta mentioned in Josephus, xv. 55, xxi. 16.

41. The sequel to i. 15. The type is in Gen. xxv. 22, where Rebekah's children, the brothers who are afterwards enemies, struggle together while still in the womb.

43. *Mother of my Lord*: In Matt. iii. 14, the Baptist is introduced as aware of his inferior position in relation to the Messiah, and here this knowledge is assigned to the mother, contrary to actual history. See note on Matt. xi. 3.

46. Here begins Mary's song of praise (Magnificat), as it is called, which is an imitation throughout of the song of Hannah, mother of Samuel (1 Sam. ii. 1—10).

47. After 1 Sam. ii. 1.

48. After 1 Sam. i. 11.

49. After 1 Sam. ii. 2.

51. After 1 Sam. ii. 3, 4.

52. After 1 Sam. ii. 8.

53. After 1 Sam. ii. 5.

55. *Abraham and his seed*: to be referred to God's remembrance in ver. 54, which is for Abraham's good.

58. [*Cousins*: "kinsfolk;" same word as in ver. 36.]

59. *On the eighth day*: according to Gen. xvii. 12. Naming was connected with circumcision (Gen. xxi. 3, 4), as it now is with baptism.

62. They asked him, so to speak, by signs.

63. *Saying*: i.e. in writing.

66. *What manner of child shall this be?* "What will this child be?"

68. The song of Zacharia (called Benedictus) is a cento from various passages in the psalms and prophets; as, for example, this verse from Pss. xli. 13, lxxii. 18, lxxxv. 2, cvi. 48; Is. xliii. 1; Ecclesiasticus xxxv. 17; Wis. x. 15.

69. *Horn*: symbol of power; comp. 1 Sam. ii. 1, 10; Ps. xviii. 3.

76. Comp. ver. 17.

78. Recollection of Hos. vi. 3.

79. Recollection of Is. ix. 2.

80. Anticipation of iii. 2, 3, and imitation of Judges xiii. 24, 25.

## CHAPTER ii.

1. *Augustus*: the first Roman emperor. Under Herod and Archelaus, the land of Judea was indirectly subject to the supremacy of Rome; but from the time when the latter was deposed and it was made a Roman province, it was directly subject to Rome. Augustus, therefore, is represented as having issued a decree that the inhabitants of the empire should be "registered," i.e. enrolled in public lists with a view to taxation. The emperor did three times direct a general registration of Roman citizens (*census populi*) to be made, but this did not extend to all the provinces ("all the world").—[*Taxed* (here and in vv. 3, 5) should be "registered," or "enrolled." So also *taxing*, in ver 2, "registration," or "enrolment."]



2. "And this registration was the first, and was made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria." It is certainly correct that a census in Judea was first taken under the emperor Augustus, at the time when Publius Sulpitius Quirinus (Cyrenius is the Greek form) was governor of Syria (A.D. 7—11), when Archelaus was deposed, and Judea and Samaria were annexed. The Romans then took a census of the land, which was the occasion for the revolt of Judas, mentioned in Acts v. 37. But, according to this, Jesus would have been born in the year 7 "after the birth of Christ," which is inconsistent with the probable date given in Luke i. 5, Matt. ii. 1. It is impossible to reconcile the two dates, for this reason, that Judea could not be subject to a census embracing the whole empire until it had been made a Roman province, least of all while it was still under Herod the Great. It is clear, moreover, from Acts v. 36, that our author's views altogether of the chronological relations of this census are somewhat confused. He introduces it here simply for the sake of bringing Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

4. In the description of the measures here taken, Roman census and Jewish family registration are confounded with one another. If "all the world" had been enrolled after this fashion, the result would have been a general migration of nations. Moreover, it was now a thousand years since Joseph's ancestor lived in Bethlehem. Cumbersome machinery to attain the end pointed out in the note on i. 26.

5. But the end in view is still unattained; for when a Roman census was taken, it was not at all necessary for women to appear. Moreover, Mary is here represented as not yet Joseph's wife, as in Matt. i. 24, but only his betrothed. The received text, which our translators accepted, has, *with his espoused wife*; but in i. 27, she is only betrothed, and here also we should read, with the oldest MSS. and translations, simply, "with his betrothed." And yet, notwithstanding her precarious state, she makes the unnecessary journey. The whole account is a tissue of impossibilities.

7. *First born*: This Evangelist, like all the others, assumes that she afterwards bore a number of other children. In consequence of her laying the child in a manger, this scene was early placed, though without any necessity, in a stable. The tradition of the second century universally represents it as in a cave.

8. We are carried into the shepherd world. David, Cyrus, and Romulus, were also brought up among shepherds. Here the shepherds afford a contrast to the exalted, the great and learned (comp. i. 51—53). The flocks were taken out in March, and brought under shelter again in November. It is therefore assumed that the birth of Jesus took place in summer, but afterwards, in order to associate the birth of Jesus with the Roman festival in celebration of the lengthening days after the winter solstice, the Church transferred the date to the end of December. The same general idea is certainly found both in the Roman festival and this narrative of the birth of Christ, the night scene here being affected by the passage in Is. ix. 2: "The people that walketh in darkness seeth a great light." See note on i. 79.

11. *In the city of David*: i.e. in Bethlehem.

12. *A sign*: a pledge of the divine origin and truth of their words, as in Is. vii. 14.

13. *A multitude of the heavenly host*: all angels, regarded as the guards of God, as in 1 Kings xxii. 19.

14. The "angelic song" (Gloria in excelsis) in the oldest MSS. consists not of three parts, but two: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men of (the divine) goodwill."

19. After Gen. xxxvii. 11.

21. See note on i. 59. Jesus was "born of a woman and subject to the law" (Gal. iv. 4). The legend here celebrates the faithful observance of the law.

22. After the first week, a woman who had borne a child had still thirty-three days to remain in the house; see Levit. xii. 3, 4. According to Luke, the parents of Jesus only remained these forty days in Bethlehem. Our Evangelist regards the whole affair as a presentation of the new-born child before God.

23. See Exod. xiii. 2.

24. See Lev. xii. 8.

25. *The consolation of Israel*: the Messiah and his kingdom.

27. *The parents*: the idea of the supernatural conception of Jesus has not penetrated to this part of the legendary materials here collected together. Comp. vv. 33, 41, 43, 48.

32. After Is. xlii. 6.

33. *Joseph and his mother*: "his father and mother."

34. Words are here put into Simeon's mouth which were not



possible until after later experiences. Comp. Matt. xxi. 44; Rom. ix. 33; 2 Cor. ii. 16. The Old Testament original is in Is. viii. 14, 15.

35. *A sword*: i.e. "the scandal of the cross," 1 Cor. i. 23.

39. Here they return, in Matt. ii. 23 they remove for the first time, to Nazareth.

41. Old Testament types are the parents of Samuel, who, according to 1 Sam. i. 3, 21, ii. 19, went up to the tabernacle at Shiloh. The feast of Easter was the first in the annual series of Jewish festivals, and was in remembrance of the exodus from Egypt, i.e. of the birth of Israel as a nation.

42. In his twelfth or thirteenth year the boy became subject to the law, "a son of the law."

44. *In the company*: "among the travellers." [The Greek word means strictly "the company of travellers," "caravan."] The festival caravan was again in motion on the journey home.

46. The scene is laid in a school in the court of the temple. It was customary for the pupils to propound questions as well as the teachers.

49. When he had left his earthly parents, he could only be in the house of God [the Greek phrase here is literally "in those of my Father," which may mean either "in my Father's house," or "about my Father's business;"] Luther renders it, "in that which is my Father's," preserving the ambiguity of the original]. The pregnant saying which is the first of those handed down to us as coming from the lips of Jesus, contains a happy anticipation of the peculiar thoughtfulness of his life. It is in harmony with the general tendency of legend to represent great men "while they are still boys" as engaged in some employment, or placed in some situation bearing upon their lofty destiny. So Augustus, as son of Apollo, while an infant, was missed from the place where he had been laid, and at last was found again at the top of a lofty tower on the eastern side, the side of good omen (*Suetonius*).

52. The Old Testament source of this passage, in which the genuine human development of Jesus is shown, is 1 Sam. ii. 26. Samuel, who is there depicted in the same manner, similarly (1 Sam. iii. 1—14) perceived the call of God in his early years.—*Stature*: This is probably the correct translation, rather than "age," as some render it. That he increased in age is a matter of course.

## CHAPTER iii.

Verses 1—6 = Mark i. 1—6.

1. The date is defined in six ways, a result of the learned care of the third Evangelist. The fifteenth year of Tiberius, the successor of Augustus, extends from August 19th, A.D. 28, to the same day, A.D. 29. His representative in Palestine from 26—36 was the procurator Pontius Pilate. But Pilate's power only extended over that part of the land, as cut up by Herod's will, which had belonged to Archelaus (see note on Matt. ii. 22). There still remained at that time as independent tetrarchs—the name given to such petty princes from the quartering of districts which originally belonged together—the brothers Herod Antipas (deposed 39 A.D.) and Philip (died 34 A.D.). The only difficulty is about Lysanias, who is spoken of as tetrarch of Abilene. This was the name given to a district near Lebanon, from its chief city, Abila. It is generally denoted by Josephus as the “former,” or “so-called,” kingdom or tetrarchy of Lysanias, who, according to his account, was a king of Iturea who died as early as 36 B.C. Unless some more successful attempt can be made than has been hitherto, to distinguish a later Lysanias from this earlier one, we must explain this statement as an error of the Evangelist.

2. It is a standing error of our author (comp. Acts iv. 6) to introduce, as high-priest, Annas, who lost that office in the year 14 A.D., and whose fourth successor, reigning from 18—36 A.D., was his son-in-law Joseph, called Caiaphas. We find the correct statement in Matt. xxvi. 57, John xviii. 13. It is true that Annas was still living at this time, and saw sons and sons-in-law made high-priests.—*The word of God came*: imitation of Jer. i. 2, 4.

5, 6. Completion of the passage in Isaiah (of which only the first verse, Is. xl. 3, is common to the three Gospels) from the Greek translation (Is. xl. 4, 5).

Verses 7—9 = Matt. iii. 7—10.

7. *Generation*: “brood.”

9. [Strictly, “And already the axe lies at the root of the trees.”]

Verses 10—15. Only in Luke.

The Baptist's address to the various classes of society. Comp. Acts xiii. 25.

Verses 16, 17 = Matt. iii. 11, 12.



## Verses 18—20. Only in Luke.

The further course of John's life is here pointed out, and the contents of Mark vi. 17—19 are anticipated.

19. *His brother Philip's wife*: "his brother's wife."

## Verses 21, 22 = Mark i. 9—11.

21. *And praying*: an addition frequently found in this Gospel (v. 16, vi. 12, ix. 18, 28, 29).

22. If Jesus had been from the first, as represented in this Gospel, the begotten son of the Spirit, there would have been no meaning in a later endowment with it. The Evangelist therefore turns the spiritual occurrence (Mark i. 10 = Matt. iii. 16) into a visible one, and makes the Spirit come down upon him *in a bodily shape like a dove*, and treats the whole scene as an external testimony to Jesus before the assembled people (comp. ver. 21).

## Verses 23—38.

A second attempt (see note on Matt. i. 1) to restore the genealogical table of the house of David. This one also (see note on Matt. i. 16) starts from the assumption that Jesus was descended from David through his father Joseph, for which reason our Evangelist concludes his introductory narrative with the remark that Jesus was "supposed to be the son of Joseph." At the same time, if this is only a supposition, the whole genealogy of the latter becomes superfluous. Just as the genealogy of Matthew gives the double seven three times (see note on Matt. i. 17), so this one gives the single seven eleven times. Genealogical tables arranged according to typical numbers in this way are the less to be credited with historical value. They are simply the products of Jewish-Christian activity in this field. At the same time, the importance of the one in the hands of the Pauline Evangelist on the side of universal religion, is no less striking than the service which is afforded by the other in support of the Jewish-Christian view of the first Evangelist (see p. 50).

27. Zorobabel occurs also in the list in Matthew (i. 12, 13). But between him and Joseph, the husband of Mary, are nine persons in Matthew, eighteen in Luke.

31. The two registers are distinguished from one another by the fact that in the first the descent is traced from David through Solomon, thus preserving the royal line; while in the second

it is through the Nathan who is mentioned in 2 Sam. v. 14, 1 Chron. iii. 5.

33. *Which was the son of Aram*, should be “which was the son of Admin, which was the son of Arni.”

#### CHAPTER iv.

Verses 1—13 = Matt. iv. 1—11.

The third temptation in Matthew appears as the second in Luke, and vice versa.

2. According to Mark i. 13, the temptations lasted forty days. According to Matthew, they came at the end of the forty days. Luke combines the two accounts.—*He did eat nothing*: The fasting in Matt. iv. 2 here rises to the miraculous.

5. *In a moment of time*: A miracle with regard to time is added to the miracle with regard to space.

6. See note on Matt. iv. 8.

9. *The Son of God*: “God’s Son.” [So also *Alford*, *Tisch.*, *Lach.*, *Tregelles*, with the oldest MSS.]

13. *All the temptation*: “every temptation.”—*For a season*: He begins afresh, xxii. 3, 28, 40. Hence the angels which appear in Matt. iv. 11 = Mark i. 13, are removed by our Evangelist to the later passage (see xxii. 43).

Verses 14, 15 = Mark i. 14, 21, 22.

Verses 16—30.

In the account common to the other two Gospels, the scene in Nazareth does not come till later (Mark vi. 1—6 = Matt. xiii. 53—58). The third Evangelist not only describes it in a later and more detailed form, but also removes it to the very beginning of the public career of Jesus. This he does, not only in order to establish more clearly the return to Nazareth (Matt. iv. 13), but also because the words of Jesus (24—27), and his lot among his own people (28—30), afford the most fitting introduction to a Gospel which celebrates the transition of Christianity from the Jews to the Gentiles. The arbitrary transposition is betrayed by the reference in ver. 23 to deeds which have been done in Capernaum, whereas he does not go there until ver. 31.

16. Whoever wished to speak in the synagogue worship, made known his intention by standing up.



17. *Opened* should be “unrolled.” From this passage and Acts xiii. 15, it seems that as early as this time readings from the prophets had become customary in the synagogue, in addition to the traditional reading of the law (Acts xv. 21), just as it has been customary in Christian worship to read the Gospels and the Epistles. These readings were afterwards called *haphtarah*, to distinguish them from the *parashah*.

18, 19. Is. lxi. 1, 2, combined with Is. lviii. 6.

23. The proverb is met with among Jews, Greeks and Romans. —*Thy country* should be “thy native city;” but the native city here represents the native country, inasmuch as the behaviour of the people of Nazareth is intended to be a type of what Jesus had to expect from his fellow-countrymen generally.

25. See 1 Kings xvii. 8—16. Instead of the three years of 1 Kings xviii. 1, we find three and a half, the significant half seven, in James v. 17, as well as here (comp. Dan. vii. 25, xii. 7; Apoc. xi. 2, 3, xii. 14, xiii. 5).

26. *Sarepta* : The widow therefore was a Gentile.

27. The leper healed was a Gentile. Comp. 2 Kings v. 1—14.

29. On the position of Nazareth, see note on Matt. ii. 23.

Verses 31—37 = Mark i. 21—28.

The third Evangelist here returns to the order of the second.

Verses 38—41 = Mark i. 29—34.

41. The speech of the demons is taken from Mark iii. 11.

Verses 42—44 = Mark i. 35—39.

As Peter has not yet been called, Mark i. 36 is omitted.

## CHAPTER V.

### Verses 1—11.

These verses here take the place of Mark i. 16—20. The transposition is betrayed by the fact that the experiences of miracles, which, according to iv. 38, 39, Peter had already passed through, are altogether ignored in ver. 8. Here, as in iv. 16—30, in the place of the simple and unimpeachable account, we find a later development, which appears altogether miraculous, legendary, and indeed consciously allegorical.

1. Instead of solitude, a popular gathering on the sea-shore; the effect of Mark i. 39.

2. Instead of men fishing, fishermen who are washing their nets on the shore ; partly from Mark i. 19.

3. From Mark iv. 1. Being anticipated here, this description of their putting out from the land is omitted from Luke viii. 4, which properly corresponds to Mark iv. 1.

4. *The deep*, into which they are to push out, signifies the Gentile world. The narrative of the calling of the apostles is turned into an allegorical picture of their mission to the whole world.

5. Unwillingness of Peter and the first apostles to undertake the Gentile mission, in spite of the smallness of their success among the Jews.

6. It was not until they went among the heathen that Christianity made real progress.—*Their net brake*: The rent which the question of the Gentile mission threatened to make in the Church. When the danger had passed away the result was the later correction, John xxi. 11, "yet was not the net broken."

8. Peter is here afraid of the presence of Jesus, as the godly man in the Old Testament in the presence of God. Comp. Exod. xxxiii. 20 ; Judges xiii. 22 ; Is. vi. 5.

9, 10. *He was astonished*: "Terror came upon him." The terror which the apostles, who are still in the trammels of Judaism, at first feel in regard to the divine action in the conversion of the Gentiles. [The meaning of the Greek is probably astonishment rather than terror.]

10. The great and simple utterance (Mark i. 17), which is the historical foundation of this whole passage, has here been developed into a material but at the same time very suggestive picture.

11 = Mark i. 20.

Verses 12—16 = Mark i. 40—45.

12. *City*: alludes to Mark i. 38.

16. Later mention of the prayer which is omitted in iv. 42. But comp. note on iii. 21.

Verses 17—26 = Mark ii. 1—12.

17. *Was present to heal them*, should be "was active so that he healed."

23. *Thy sins be forgiven thee*: "thy sins are forgiven thee." [The Greek is the same as in ver. 20.]



Verses 27—39 = Mark ii. 13—22.

27. *Publican . . . receipt of custom*: “tax-gatherer . . . tax-office.”

29. The third Evangelist takes Mark ii. 15 = Matt. ix. 10, to mean that the meal was in the house of the newly-called tax-gatherer; and he thus explains the presence of the other tax-gatherers in the company.

39. Only in Luke. Palates that are accustomed to “the good old wine” would rather not learn the sharp, rough taste of the must: a hint in regard to the treatment of the question of progress for the many persons who are disposed to cling to whatever is old, and cherish it so affectionately.

#### CHAPTER vi.

Verses 1—5 = Mark ii. 23—28.

1. *Second Sabbath after the first*: a phrase which cannot be explained, and for which the oldest authorities give simply “Sabbath.”

Verses 6—11 = Mark iii. 1—6.

9. *On the Sabbath days*, should be “on the Sabbath.”

Verses 12—19 = Mark iii. 7—19.

12. Here Jesus prepares himself in prayer by night for the important business of the next day (see note on iii. 21).—*A mountain* should be “the mountain.”

15. *Simon called Zelotes*, i.e. “zealot.” A name given, from the time of the rising of Judas of Galilee (Acts v. 37), to the extreme and most enthusiastic of the Pharisees: the party that urged a rising against Rome. In Mark iii. 18 = Matt. x. 4, we find in place of it the Aramaic word “Canani” in the Greek form; this might certainly mean simply a citizen of Cana in Galilee (John ii. 1, 11, iv. 46, xxi. 2); hence “Simon of Cana.”

16. *Judas the brother of James*: see note on Matt. x. 3.

17. According to this, Jesus delivers the same address standing on a plain, which, according to Matt. v. 1, he delivers sitting upon a mountain.

19. See note on Mark v. 30.

Verses 20—49.

This is the outline that the first Evangelist has filled up with

his "Sermon on the Mount" (Matt. v. 3—vii. 27). Here it is simply an address to the apostles, strictly confined to the moral fundamental regulations of the kingdom which is to be founded by them, and to be defended and enlarged by means of all the resources of patient love. See note on vv. 39, 40.

Verses 20—23 = Matt. v. 3, 4, 6, 11, 12.

Four blessings.

Verses 24—26. Only in Luke.

Four woes corresponding to the four blessings, reproduced from Matt. xxiii. 13 sqq. in an entirely new form. Type in Deut. xxvii. 15 sqq.

Verses 27—42.

Forbearance, and love of enemies.

27, 28 = Matt. v. 44.

29 = Matt. v. 39, 40.

30 = Matt. v. 42.

31 = Matt. vii. 12.

32 = Matt. v. 46.

33, 34. Only in Luke. In Matthew, this is replaced by Matt. v. 47.

35 = Matt. v. 44, 45.

36 = Matt. v. 48.

37, 38 = Matt. vii. 1, 2.

39, 40. These verses break the connection, and have been interpolated from Matt. xv. 14, x. 24.

41, 42 = Matt. vii. 3, 5.

Verses 43—49.

Concluding similes.

43—45 = Matt. vii. 16—18, 20, xii. 33—35.

46 = Matt. vii. 21—23.

47—49 = Matt. vii. 24—27.

## CHAPTER vii.

Verses 1—10 = Matt. viii. 5—13.

2. *Servant*: see note on Matt. viii. 6.

3—5. A tradition peculiar to the third Evangelist, in contradiction of Matt. viii. 6.



6, 7. Different in Matt. viii. 8. The humility of one born a Gentile here goes still further than in Matt.

Verses 11—17. Only in Luke.

The raising of one who is actually dead is introduced, in addition to the healing of one who is "sick and ready to die" (ver. 2), in order to prepare for the words, "the dead are raised" (ver. 22); while the remaining contents of ver. 22 are established immediately before in ver. 21. By Nain, where this event is placed, we must understand the Galilean place of that name lying south of Nazareth, in the immediate vicinity of Shunem. The origin of the narrative is found in the raising of the son of the Shunamite by Elisha (2 Kings iv. 18—37), combined with the similar miracle which Elijah performed upon the son of the widow of Sarepta, who has been mentioned in iv. 26 (1 Kings xvii. 17—24).

15. *And he delivered him to his mother*: after 1 Kings xvii. 23.

16. *Visited*: The Greek word is the same as in i. 68, 78.

Verses 18—35 = Matt. xi. 2—19.

20, 21. Only in Luke.

29, 30. Interpolation from Matt. xxi. 31, 32.

30. *Rejected the counsel of God against themselves*, should be "brought to nought God's counsel to themselves."

35. *All*: inserted by the third Evangelist contrary to the original reference of the saying to an individual. See note on Matt. xi. 19.

Verses 36—50.

The story which appears in Mark xiv. 3—9 = Matt. xxvi. 6—13, is here introduced earlier as a justification of ver. 34. The narrative is at the same time brought to bear upon the way in which Jesus received lost and outcast sinners, which Luke so often brings into prominence. Hence the anointing by a female disciple in the house of one who is unclean (Simon the leper, Mark xiv. 3), here becomes an anointing by one who is unclean in the house of the "clean" (Simon the Pharisee, see vv. 36, 40). This affair reminds us also of the companionship of Jesus with sinners at table (Mark ii. 15), and of the entrance of publicans and harlots into the kingdom of heaven in place of the Pharisees (Matt. xxi. 31).

37. *A sinner*: The Gentiles are simply "sinners" (Gal. ii. 15).

In this altered form of the narrative the woman represents them.—*Alabaster*: as in Mark xiv. 3.—*Box*, should be “bottle” or “vase.”

38. *At his feet behind him*: quite a natural position, from the custom of reclining at meal-time explained in the note on Matt. ix. 10.

39. Companion piece to the murmuring of the disciples in Matt. xxvi. 8, 9.

40. Parallel to the words of Jesus in defence of the woman in Matt. xxvi. 10.

41, 42. The parable of the fifty and five hundred francs reminds us of Matt. xviii. 23 sqq.

44—46. In the place of the negligent Simon, who had forgotten the usual courtesies, she has, as it were, saved the honour of the house by her behaviour to Jesus. See note on Matt. vi. 17.

47. Either the love which is manifested is the proof of the forgiveness of sins which has taken place, or else the two things mutually act and re-act on each other.

49. After Matt. ix. 3.

50. After Matt. ix. 22.

#### CHAPTER viii.

##### Verses 1—3. Only in Luke.

This stands here on account of its connection with the preceding section (see ver. 2).

2. *Magdalene*: see note on Matt. xxvii. 56.—*Seven devils*: according to xi. 26, this indicates a relapse.

3. The women here mentioned are not otherwise known.

##### Verses 4—18 = Mark iv. 1—25.

16. [*Candle . . . candlestick*: “lamp . . . lampstand.”]

##### Verses 19—21 = Mark iii. 31—35.

These verses are placed here on account of the connection between ver. 21 and ver. 15.

##### Verses 22—25 = Mark iv. 35—41.

25. *What manner of man is this?* “Who is this?”

##### Verses 26—39 = Mark v. 1—20.

31. *Into the deep*: The meaning is, “into hell” (see note on Matt. viii. 30), from which it is supposed the devils are continu-



ally trying to get out, in order to live comfortably in the bodies of men, or at least of beasts.

33. *Down a steep place* should be “over the precipice.”

Verses 40—56 = Mark v. 21—43.

42. *One only*: an addition of the third Evangelist, as in vii. 12, after 2 Kings iv. 14 sqq., where the son of the Shunammite appears as an only child.

51. *To go in*: Confusion of the entrance into the house (Mark v. 38, 39) with the entrance into the chamber of death (Mark v. 40).

#### CHAPTER ix.

Verses 1—6 = Mark vi. 7—13.

Verses 7—9 = Mark vi. 14—16.

9. The third Evangelist is unwilling to give a cultivated man credit for vulgar superstition (Mark vi. 16 = Matt. xiv. 2), and so alters the speech of Herod, and by the concluding words of the verse prepares us for the statement in xxiii. 8.

Verses 10—17 = Mark vi. 30—44.

10. See note on Mark vi. 45.

Verses 18—26 = Mark viii. 27—38.

18. After a considerable digression, the third Evangelist again takes up the thread of the narrative, but in such a way that the scene is still laid in the same place as in the preceding passage (Mark vi. 46), and he rejects the journey to Cæsarea Philippi.

23. *Daily*: an addition of the Paulinist, after Rom. viii. 36, 1 Cor. xv. 31, 2 Cor. iv. 16.—[*Will come*: i.e. “desires to come.”]

24. [*Will save*: i.e. “desires to save.”—*Will lose*: strictly, “shall lose.”]

Verse 27 = Mark ix. 1.

Verses 28—36 = Mark ix. 2—9.

28. *An eight days*: a week. See note on Matt. xvii. 1.

31, 32. Only in Luke. In recollection of the scene in Gethsemane (Mark xiv. 40), this enigmatical event is placed in the night, and a reference to the death of Jesus is added to it.

33. Peter desires to delay the departing forms.

34. In imitation of Exod. xxxiii. 10, the dwellers on earth behold in astonishment how the heavenly forms enter the clouds.

Verses 37—45 = Mark ix. 14—32.

37. *The next day*: an addition inconsistent with the original narrative. Probably the type of this is Moses remaining all night on the Mount of the Revelation, Exod. xxiv. 18.

38. *Mine only child*: an addition like that in viii. 42.

43. According to this representation, Jesus desires to subdue the exultation of the disciples at this success by pointing out to them the dark future.

Verses 46—48 = Mark ix. 33—37.

Verses 49—50 = Mark ix. 38—41.

Verses 51—56. Only in Luke.

52. *Samaritans*: see note on Matt. x. 5. According to Matt. xix. 1 = Mark x. 1, Jesus' journey takes place on the further side of the Jordan; according to the account of the third Evangelist (see also xiii. 22, xvii. 11), he proceeds along the western bank to Jerusalem, and so passes through Samaria, which separates Galilee from Judea.

54. *Even as Elias did*: 2 Kings i. 10, 12.

55. These words of Jesus (with a reference to 1 Kings xix. 11, 12) are wanting in some very old MSS., as are also the reference of the disciples to Elijah which precedes, and the explanation afterwards, which is introduced from xix. 10.

Verses 57—60 = Matt. viii. 19—22.

Verses 61, 62. Only in Luke.

An advance upon 1 Kings xix. 19—21.

62. One who is at the plough has only to attend to the furrow that he desires to plough.

## CHAPTER X.

Verses 1—16 = ix. 1—6.

1. *Other seventy*: In distinction from the twelve who were sent out in ix. 1, 2, there appears here another and wider circle of disciples. The third Evangelist really gives the same mission address here over again, but from a different and fuller source, while he justifies the repetition by representing this second address as directed to different hearers, whose number is determined by the type of the "seventy elders" (Numb. ix. 16, 25), and is just as significant as the number twelve (comp. Exod. xv. 27, the twelve



springs and seventy palm-trees in Elim). At the same time, the third Evangelist regards these seventy disciples as intended for the new field of labour which Jesus has entered upon among the Samaritans, the first fruits of the seventy Gentile nations which the Jews were accustomed to reckon (after Gen. x.). Still the actual conversion of the Gentiles is committed to the twelve (xxiv. 47).

2 = Matt. ix. 37, 38.

3 = Matt. x. 16.

4 = Matt. x. 10.—*Salute no man*: The Eastern forms of salutation are very ceremonious and would cause delay.

5 = Matt. x. 12.

6 = Matt. x. 13.—*The son*: "a son."

7 = Matt. x. 10. Comp. the more extended form in 1 Cor. ix. 4—14.

8. See 1 Cor. x. 27.

9 = Matt. x. 7, 8.

12—15 = Matt. x. 15, xi. 21—24.

16 = Matt. x. 40.

Verses 17—20. Only in Luke.

18. Comp. Is. xiv. 12; Rev. xii. 9. The power of the evil one is destroyed from its foundations.

19. After Ps. xci. 13; Ezek. ii. 6.

20. *Names are written in heaven*: The idea of the book of heaven is found in Exod. xxxii. 32, 33; Ps. lxix. 29; Phil. iv. 3; Rev. iii. 5.

Verses 21, 22 = Matt. xi. 25—27.

Verses 23, 24 = Matt. xiii. 16, 17.

Verses 25—37. Only in Luke.

This is a more detailed form of the same narrative that was given shortly in Matt. xxii. 35—40 = Mark xii. 28—34.

29. *To justify himself*: i.e. to show that the matter is not so simple, the question not so superfluous, as it seems.

30. Between Jerusalem and Jericho is a desert tract which in the time of Jerome was still rendered unsafe by robbers.

32. *Levite*: member of the tribe entrusted with the care of matters connected with public worship, the first line of which consisted of the priests proper.

34. *Oil and wine*: often mentioned by the ancients as medicinal.

35. *Pence*: denarii (see note on Mark vi. 37).

36. In the opinion of the Scribe, the chief thing was the question, who, according to the correct scholastic view, could be considered a neighbour. The answer of Jesus makes the chief thing the question, how one practically becomes neighbour to any one.

Verses 38—42. Only in Luke.

This passage is further developed in John xi. 1 sqq., xii. 1 sqq.

42. *One thing is needful*: i.e. to hear my words. But some old MSS. read, "only a little, or one thing, is enough," which we should have to understand as referring to the dishes at table.

#### CHAPTER xi.

Verse 1. Only in Luke.

Verses 2—4 = Matt. vi. 9—13.

In the oldest MSS. the prayer here is still shorter: "Father, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; our needful bread give us daily; and forgive us our sins, for even we forgive all who are indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation."

Verses 5—8. Only in Luke.

This is quite consistent with the tendency of Luke mentioned in the note on iii. 21.

Verses 9—13 = Matt. vii. 7—11.

Verses 14—26.

14, 15 = Matt. ix. 32—34, xii. 22—24.

16 = Matt. xii. 38.

17—23 = Matt. xii. 25—30.

24—26 = Matt. xii. 43—45.

Verses 27, 28. Only in Luke.

Practically the same as viii. 19—21, with which passage the present one is connected by the reference to the mother, the vicinity of viii. 16 = xi. 33, and the identity of expression in viii. 21 = xi. 28.

Verses 29—32 = Matt. xii. 39—42.

31, 32. *A greater*: "more."



Verses 33—36 = Matt. v. 15, vi. 22, 23.

33. *In a secret place*, should be “into concealment.”—[*Candle . . . candlestick*: “lamp . . . lampstand.”]

36. Cumbersome obverse of Matt. vi. 23.

Verses 37—54.

Only in Luke, in so far as it is not represented by Matt. xxiii. 4, 13, 23—36.

37. *To dine*: strictly speaking breakfast is meant. So also xiv. 12; Matt. xxii. 4. The chief meal of the day took place in the evening.

38. See note on Matt. xv. 2.

39 = Matt. xxiii. 25.

40, 41 = Matt. xxiii. 26.

41. A loving deed makes the hands clean.—*Such things as ye have* should be “that which is therein.”

42 = Matt. xxiii. 23.

43 = Mark xii. 38, 39.

44 = Matt. xxiii. 27, 28.—*Are not aware of them*: and hence defile themselves without knowing it (Numb. xix. 16). Above such a burial-ground arose in the life-time of Jesus the half-Gentile royal city of Tiberias, the residence of Herod Antipas, always avoided by Jesus.

46 = Matt. xxiii. 4.

47 = Matt. xxiii. 29.

48. A different arrangement of Matt. xxiii. 31. The work by which the sons thought to atone for the deeds of their fathers may be conversely regarded, from the point of view of simple continuity, as bringing in the climax and completion.

49—51 = Matt. xxiii. 34—36.

49. *The wisdom of God*: The quotation from a Jewish writing no longer extant (comp., however, 2 Chron. xxiv. 19) extends to the words, “between the altar and the temple,” in ver. 51.

52 = Matt. xxiii. 13.

53. *To provoke him to speak*, should be “to question him.”

## CHAPTER xii.

### Verses 1—12.

A compilation from Mark viii. 15, Matt. x. 19, 20, 26—33, xii. 32, introduced by an occasion which is rather obscure, and is little suited to the greater part of these sayings (ver. 1).

Verses 13—21. Only in Luke.

13. *The inheritance*: comp. xv. 12.

Verses 22—34 = Matt. vi. 25—33.

26. Only in Luke.

32. Only in Luke.

Verses 35—38. Only in Luke.

35. *Let your loins be girded about*: The long Oriental garment was girt up, that it might not be in the way of free movement in walking or working (Jer. i. 17).—*Lights burning*: as in Matt. xxv. 4.

36. *From the wedding*: from a wedding feast to which he had been invited as a guest.

37. *He shall gird himself*: the converse of the preceding state of things. Carried out in John xiii. 4—17.—*Come forth* should be “come to them.”

38. *Watch*: see note on Matt. xiv. 25.

Verses 39—46 = Matt. xxiv. 43—51.

41. *To all*: answer in Mark xiii. 37.

42. The bearing of the new question which follows, instead of an answer, upon the question of Peter, depends partly upon the prominent position among his fellow-servants assigned to him in Matt. xvi. 19 as well as here, and partly upon the special responsibility which, according to vv. 47, 48, distinguished the intimate disciples from the rest of the believers.

Verses 47—50. Only in Luke.

48. The proportion of the demand to the opportunity here spoken of is vividly illustrated in Matt. xxv. 14—30.

49. *Fire*: according to the description that follows, a violent spiritual ferment.

50. *But I have, &c.*: i.e. “But I must first be baptized with a baptism.”—*Baptism*: see note on Matt. xx. 22.

Verses 51—53 = Matt. x. 34—36.

Verses 54—56 = Matt. xvi. 2, 3.

Verses 57—59 = Matt. v. 25, 26.

57. Only in Luke; introduced in order to connect what precedes with what follows.—*Of yourselves*: without the judge mentioned in ver. 58.



58, 59 = Matt. v. 25, 26. But if we take it in connection with ver. 27, the adversary would not be a man, but the same who is also judge, viz. God, early reconciliation with whom is recommended.

58. *Officer* should be "exactor."

59. *Mite*: lepton. See note on Matt. v. 26.

### CHAPTER xiii.

#### Verses 1—17. Only in Luke.

1. We know nothing more of this slaughter, which Pilate must have committed among Galilean pilgrims in the temple court on the occasion of some festival. Josephus, however, relates very similar acts of this same governor, and this time Barabbas may very likely have been involved in the matter (comp. Mark xv. 7).

4. *The tower in Siloam*: in the south-east of the city (see note on John ix. 7). Of this disaster also we know nothing more.

6. *Fig-tree*: symbol of Israel (Jer. xxiv. 2 sq.), like the vine which twines round it, and is therefore also mentioned with it in Hos. ix. 10. See notes on Matt. xxi. 19, 33. In Matt. xxi. 19, the symbolic speech becomes a symbolic act.

8. Jewish care of trees (Deut. xx. 19).

11. *Could in no wise lift up herself* should be "could not stand quite upright."

14. He attacks the people, but he means Jesus.

Verses 18—21 = Matt. xiii. 31—33.

Verses 22, 23. Only in Luke.

Verse 24 = Matt. vii. 13.

Verses 25—27 = Matt. vii. 21—23, xxv. 11, 12.

Verses 28, 29 = Matt. viii. 11, 12.

Verse 30 = Matt. xix. 30, xx. 16.

Verses 31—33. Only in Luke.

31. *Herod will kill thee*: i.e. "Herod desires to kill thee." Herod wishes to be free from the embarrassment of the Messianic disturbance in his territory, but does not venture upon an open attack. Here also (as in Mark iii. 6, viii. 15) the Pharisees, in their attempt to intimidate the Messiah, act in concert with Herod.

32. *That fox*: The answer passes over the go-betweens to the

crafty tetrarch himself.—*Three days*: proverbial for the shortest space of time. During the meagre period that is still vouchsafed him, he will allow nothing to interfere with his activity.—*Be perfect*: “make an end.”

33. The other side of the matter: this same short period which still remains he will not employ simply in the exercise of his calling (ver. 32), but also for a journey to Jerusalem; not, however, in order to please Herod, but because Jerusalem, not Herod, has the sad privilege of slaying the prophets.

Verses 34, 35 = Matt. xxiii. 37—39.

35. *Left unto you desolate*, should be “forsaken.”

#### CHAPTER xiv.

Verses 1—15. Only in Luke, except vv. 3, 5, 11.

3 = Mark iii. 4.

4. Legendary development of this story in vi. 6—11.

5 = Matt. xii. 11, 12.

7. *A parable*: The address in vv. 8—10 cannot be intended for anything else (comp. ver. 11). But the third Evangelist takes it as a direction for behaviour at table, and represents it, according to what follows in vv. 12—14, as being uttered at the table of his host. The words of the latter verses (12—14) would in that case be positively rude. This is an example of an unfortunate attempt to supply a traditional saying of Jesus with an historical frame.

8—10. After Prov. xxv. 6, 7.

11 = Matt. xxiii. 12.

14. *The resurrection of the just*: a Pauline idea (1 Cor. xv. 23; 1 Thess. vi. 16), see p. 50.

15. Connecting link occasioned by the promise in ver. 14 and the subject of the parable in ver. 16.

Verses 16—24 = Matt. xxii. 1—14.

This was given in Matt. in a simpler form.

21—23. Picture of the calling of the Gentiles.

Verses 25—27 = Matt. x. 37, 38.

25. Only in Luke.

26, 27 = Matt. x. 37, 38, but with stronger expressions.



## Verses 28—33. Only in Luke.

Though found only in Luke, this passage stands in the closest connection with ver. 27, as pointing out all that is involved in the resolution spoken of in that verse.

Verses 34, 35 = Matt. v. 13.

35. *For the dunghill*: as manure.

## CHAPTER xv.

Verses 1—3. Only in Luke. [Comp. Matt. ix. 10 sqq.]

Inserted as an introduction to what follows.

Verses 4—7 = Matt. xviii. 12—14.

A different form of the parable of the Lost Sheep in Matthew.

4. *In the wilderness*: uncultivated land, pasture, in distinction from arable land.

5. After Is. xl. 11; Ezek. xxxiv. 16.

Verses 8—32. Only in Luke.

8. *Pieces of silver*: drachmæ. See note on Matt. xvii. 24.

11—32 = Matt. xxi. 28—31, but a more detailed form.

16. *Husks* would mean empty shells. The Greek word means here the pods of a tree still found in Palestine, which are used as food by the very poor (the so-called St. John's bread). [The carob bean, or locust.]

## CHAPTER xvi.

Verses 1—12. Only in Luke.

2. In these words the steward is already discharged, and has only to give in his account. The opportunity afforded by the performance of this final duty he craftily uses to secure himself against homelessness in the future.

3. *I cannot dig*: i.e. "I cannot work in the fields."

6, 7. Knowledge of human nature shows that one is to be had cheaper than another, and the experienced steward buys none too dear.

8. *Commended*: when he afterwards became aware of these proceedings, he was surprised by the ingenuity of his former servant, and recognized it as his best quality. That he also condemned his conduct stands to reason, and is moreover assumed in vv. 10—12.—*In their generation*: properly, towards their generation, i.e. in their intercourse with those who are like them.

9. [Luther translates this verse: "And I also say unto you, Make to yourselves friends with the unrighteous mammon," &c.; and Holtzmann's note depends upon this rendering.] In the application of the parable, again, the qualified praise is to be distinguished from the unqualified blame. In regard to the first, Jesus "also" perceives a sign of true prudence in employing the "unrighteous mammon," with the possession and use of which in any case so much sin is connected, at least in such a way as is pointed out in Prov. xix. 17 ("He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord") or Matt. xxv. 40. If we compare the present parable with these sayings, we find that which the Lord himself does as the representative of the poor, is here spoken of as being done by the poor, viz. receiving *into everlasting habitations* (the heavenly antitype of the tents of the patriarchs in the holy land).

10—12. The obverse: over against the qualified praise stands unqualified blame of faithlessness and deceit.

11. God has entrusted mammon to His children to try them, in order that He may entrust true riches to them in proportion to the use they make of this.

12. *That which is another man's*: because the steward disposed of another's property as if it were his own.

Verse 13 = Matt. vi. 24.

Verses 14, 15. Only in Luke.

Verses 16—18.

The law and the prophets are spoken of, because the parable which follows culminates in an explanation of their value and perpetual validity (29, 31); similarly ver. 15 prepares for the change of relations in vv. 22, 23.

16 = Matt. xi. 12, 13.

17 = Matt. v. 18.

18 = Matt. v. 32. An example of ver. 17.

Verses 19—31. Only in Luke.

20. *Lazarus*: later form of Eleazar ("God-help"). A unique example of a proper name in a parable.

21. Reminds us of Matt. xv. 27. The third Evangelist seems to take Lazarus as the representative of Gentile Christianity.—



*Licked his sores*: according to some, from compassion; according to others, to increase his sufferings.

22. *Abraham's bosom*: In connection with this picture, comp. John i. 18, xiii. 23. Abraham appears, in true Jewish fashion, as president at the heavenly meal. Comp. Matt. viii. 11.

23. According to ver. 26, the dwelling-places of the pious (Paradise) and of the ungodly (Hell, Gehenna) are represented as separate places in one and the same region beyond the grave.

24. *Flame*: see Mark ix. 44, 46, 48.

#### CHAPTER xvii.

Verses 1, 2 = Matt. xviii. 7, 6.

Verses 3, 4 = Matt. xviii. 15, 21, 22.

Verses 5, 6 = Matt. xvii. 20.

5. Only in Luke.

6 = Matt. xvii. 20.

Verses 7—21. Only in Luke.

7. *Will say unto him by and by, when he is come in from the field, Go and sit down . . .*: "Will say unto him when he comes home from the field, Go straightway and sit down . . ."

7, 8. Christian reverse of this traditional behaviour is found in xii. 37.

10. *Unprofitable servants*: having done nothing which is properly thankworthy, nothing that goes beyond our duty.

11. *Through the midst of*: The Greek signifies either "through the midst of" or "between;" but in either case the writer's ideas are confused, as Jesus had already (ix. 51—53) traversed the Samaritan territory in order to proceed straight to Jerusalem.

12—19. Here we have a second form of v. 12—14, with fuller details, after the pattern of the healing of Naaman (2 Kings v. 1 sqq.), which took place in the same neighbourhood. The ten who are healed stand for the ten tribes whose semi-Gentile descendants are represented here, as in x. 30—37, as morally and religiously superior to those of pure Israelitish blood.

14 = v. 14.

20. *With observation*: i.e. so that it can be observed.

21. *Neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there!* It is not connected with definite places. See also ver. 23.—*Within you*: As

he is speaking to Pharisees, the other translation, which is also grammatically possible, is to be preferred, viz. "among you," i.e. it is already here.

#### Verses 22—37.

This section is found in Luke alone, except in so far as it coincides with Matt. xxiv. 17, 18, 23, 26—28, 37—41.

22. *One of the days of the Son of Man*: when the Messiah shall be visibly present. See v. 35.

23, 24 = Matt. xxiv. 23, 26, 27.

26, 27 = Matt. xxiv. 37—39.

30 = Matt. xxiv. 39.

31 = Mark xiii. 15, 16.

32. *Lot's wife*: She perished with the property upon which she looked back: the relinquishment of all earthly possessions has been previously demanded (ver. 31).

33 = Matt. x. 39.—*Shall preserve it*: strictly, "shall keep it alive."

34. *Two in one bed*: hence, slaves. Another form of Matt. xxiv. 40.

35 = Matt. xxiv. 41.

36. This verse is wanting in the old MSS. It has been introduced from Matt. xxiv. 40.

37. Jesus has already answered this question in ver. 24. Here he consequently only points out in his answer (= Matt. xxiv. 28), that where any object of judgment is, there the judgment will be executed.

#### CHAPTER xviii.

##### Verses 1—14. Only in Luke.

3. *Came*: The word in Greek means that she was in the habit of coming.—*Avenge me*: properly, "do me justice." So also vv. 5, 8.

5. *Lest by her continual coming she weary me*, should be "Lest she come at last and assault me."

7. Comp. Rev. vi. 10.—*And shall not God avenge His own elect . . . though He bear long with them*, should be "And should God not deliver His own elect . . . but bear it patiently." The phrase "bear it patiently" has some reference to Rev. vi. 11. This passage, the reading in which is somewhat uncertain, is intended to



explain the “stumbling-block” of God’s delay, and belongs historically to later times (2 Pet. iii. 9). So also does what follows.

11. *Stood*: comp. Matt. vi. 5.

12. *Twice*: according to custom, on Monday and Thursday.—*Tithes of all*: see note on Matt. xxiii. 23.

14. *Justified*: in the Pauline sense. The rest = Matt. xxiii. 12.

Verses 15—17 = Mark x. 13—16.

Verses 18—27 = Mark x. 17—27.

18. *A certain ruler*: because, according to ver. 23, a man of property. Different in Matt. xix. 20.

Verses 28—30 = Mark x. 28—30.

Mark x. 31 has been anticipated in Luke xiii. 30.

Verses 31—34 = Mark x. 32, 34.

34. Only in Luke. See note on Matt. xx. 21.

Verses 35—43 = Mark x. 46—52.

35. *Nigh unto Jericho*: rather, as he was going out of that city (Matt. xx. 29 = Mark x. 46). The third Evangelist has a special interest in the entrance because of xix. 1—10, and explains by this passage the “press” (xix. 3).

#### CHAPTER xix.

Verses 1—10. Only in Luke.

4. *Sycamore tree*: properly, “mulberry-fig tree.” Avenues of these trees are found in Oriental towns.

5. Jesus recognizes in this tax-gatherer, with his longing to see him, the host who is appointed to receive him during his stay in Jericho.

8. *Four-fold*: according to Numb. v. 6, 7, too much; but comp. Exod. xxii. 1.

9. *A son of Abraham*: as in xiii. 16, “a daughter of Abraham,” not simply in the sense of national, but also moral kinship.

Verses 11—27 = Matt. xxv. 14—30.

We have fuller detail here than in the corresponding passage in Matthew.

12. *A certain nobleman*: The circumstances are taken from the history of the royal house of the Herods. Thus Archelaus and Antipas travelled to Rome to the emperor in order to confirm

or extend their rule, while their subjects at home were dissatisfied (ver. 14).—*Into a far country*: to Italy, where crowns were to be obtained in those days.

13. *Pounds*: i.e. minæ. An Attic mina was 100 drachmæ, about £3. 10s.; hence “in a very little” (ver. 17). Vast sums, on the other hand, are distributed in Matt. xxv. 15.

14. The Jews protested by an embassy against the rule of Archelaus; here the symbol of their hostility to the Messiahship of Jesus.

20. *In a napkin*: i.e. wrapped up and carefully preserved.

27. The reckoning with unbelieving Judaism; as in vv. 15—26 we have the reckoning with the believing Christian community.

Verses 28—38 = Mark xi. 1—11.

28 = Mark x. 32.

38. Confusion of the popular cry with the angelic song in ii. 14.

Verses 39—44. Only in Luke.

40. *If these hold their peace, the stones will cry out*: a proverbial expression, comp. Hab. ii. 11.

42. *If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day*, should be “If only thou also didst know, and in this thy day.”—*In this thy day*: In contrast to the days of Capernaum, of Nazareth, of Bethsaida, which had already passed, Jerusalem’s day of grace had now dawned, when she might submit to the Messiah.

43. *Cast a trench* should be “cast up a mound.” In the year 70, Titus cast up a mound of earth and stakes. The origin of the passage is in Is. xxix. 3.

44. *Shall lay thee even, &c.*, should be “shall dash thee and thy children to pieces on the ground.” Comp. Ps. cxxxvii. 9; 1 Kings ix. 7.—*Shall not leave in thee one stone upon another* = Mark xiii. 2.—*Thy visitation*: when graciously regarded by God. See note on vii. 16.

Verses 45—48 = Mark xi. 15—18.

47. *Daily*: The third Evangelist abolishes the reckoning of the days which is found in the first two.

## CHAPTER XX.

Verses 1—8 = Mark xi. 27—33.

2. *These things*: viz. the teaching mentioned in ver. 1.



Verses 9—19 = Mark xii. 1—12.

Verses 20—26 = Mark xii. 13—17.

20. *Watched him* should be “lay in wait for him.”

26. *Could not take hold of his words*: i.e. “could not catch him in his speech.”

Verses 27—38 = Mark xii. 18—27.

34. Only in Luke.

38. *For all live unto him*: comp. Acts xvii. 28.

Verses 39, 40 = Mark xii. 28, 34.

The middle part (Mark xii. 29—33) is omitted on account of x. 25—28.

Verses 41—44 = Mark xii. 35—37.

Verses 45—47 = Mark xii. 38—40.

#### CHAPTER xxi.

Verses 1—4 = Mark xii. 41—44.

4. *Living* should be “property.”

Verses 5—36 = Mark xiii. 1—37.

5. *Gifts*: The votive offerings, one of which, for example, was a golden vine dedicated by Herod I. According to this, the speech which follows must have been delivered in the temple. See ver. 37. Different in Matt. xxiv. 1 = Mark xiii. 1.

12. *Before all these*: different in Matt. xxiv. 9. The third Evangelist removes vv. 10, 11, to the distant future.

13. Only in Luke. All this will only result in giving you an opportunity of testifying to the gospel before all the world. The Evangelist is thinking of the history of Paul.

15. Only in Luke. Refers to Acts vi. 10.

18, 19. Only in Luke.—*In your patience possess ye your souls*, should be “by your endurance ye shall save your souls.”—The proverbial form of the promise of these two verses is to be explained by xii. 7, Acts xxvii. 34. The actual meaning, viz. that patient endurance shall preserve them from the last extremity (a free reproduction of Mark xiii. 13), is inconsistent with ver. 16, and refers to the time of the Evangelist himself, who was familiar with proceedings which did not end in death.

20. Historical interpretation of the “abomination of desola-

tion," Matt. xxiv. 15 = Mark xiii. 14; the Roman army standing on sacred soil.

21. *In the midst of it*: i.e. in Jerusalem.

22. Only in Luke. This refers to the historical experiences of the year 70.

23. *Wrath upon this people*: comp. 1 Thess. ii. 16.

24. Only in Luke, partly from the same experiences that find expression in ver. 22, partly from Apoc. xi. 2. The proverbial style of speech after 1 Macc. iii. 45, iv. 60.—*The times of the Gentiles*: after Rom. xi. 25.

25. The second half of this verse is literally: "and on earth anxiety of the nations in perplexity at the tumult of the sea and the waves."

28. Only in Luke.

34—36. Only in Luke. After Rom. xiii. 13; Gal. v. 21; Eph. v. 18; 1 Thess. v. 2—7; and also especially Is. xxiv. 17.

36. *May be accounted worthy*: probably we should read, "may be in a position."

Verses 37, 38. Only in Luke.

Instead of counting the days and distinguishing between them, the third Evangelist gives a general picture of Jesus' mode of life in this last period. We find it further detailed in John viii. 1, 2, and indeed John vii. 53—viii. 11 belongs here altogether.

## CHAPTER xxii.

Verses 1, 2 = Mark xiv. 1, 2.

Verses 3—6 = Mark xiv. 10, 11.

4. *Captains*: the Levitical temple guard who were to take him prisoner.

6. *Promised*, should be "agreed to it."—*In the absence of the multitude*, should be "without tumult."

Verses 7—13 = Mark xiv. 12—16.

12. *Furnished*: properly, "provided with couches" (on which to recline at table).

Verses 14—23 = Mark xiv. 17—25.

15—17. Only in Luke.

16. *Until it be fulfilled*: As, according to Matt. v. 17, 18, the whole law must be fulfilled, so too the requirements of that part



of it which concerns the Paschal feast will only be fully discharged in the impending kingdom of God. So we sometimes describe the completion of all as "the great supper."

18. According to this, Jesus appears to decline to partake of the wine himself.—*Until the kingdom of God shall come*: on this rests 1 Cor. xi. 26, "till he come."

19, 20. After the narrative of the last supper has been given in vv. 15—18, in a form which agrees pretty closely with the account in the other two Gospels (Matt. xxvi. 29 = Mark xiv. 25), the institution properly speaking follows in the form of the Pauline account, 1 Cor. xi. 23—25.

20. *The new testament*, should be "the new covenant."—*In my blood*: properly, "through my blood." The cup is made a symbol of the new covenant, by the wine which it contains being made a symbol of the blood which is so soon to be shed by a Messiah who sacrifices himself for his people.

21. In the ordinary account the announcement of the treachery precedes the supper, whereas here the traitor expressly appears as taking part in it.

Verses 24—27. Instead of Mark x. 35—45.

25. See note on Mark x. 42.

26. *The younger*: In Jewish and Christian communities the younger members undertook the more burdensome services (comp. Acts v. 6, 10).

27, 28. Only in Luke. For the explanation of the first saying, see John xiii. 4—17 (comp. also note on xii. 37).

Verses 29, 30. Instead of Matt. xix. 28.

Verses 31, 32. Only in Luke.

31. *Hath desired to have you*: literally, "hath obtained you by asking," as he did in Job i. 8 sqq., ii. 4 sqq.—*Sift you as wheat*: i.e. with a sieve or a winnowing-fan.

32. *I have prayed for thee*: "I have asked for thee." Development of this in John xvii. 11, 15, 20.—*When thou art converted* ["When thou hast turned back" (in repentance), *De Wette*], *strengthen thy brethren*: development in John xxi. 15—17.

Verses 33, 34. Instead of Mark xiv. 29—31.

Verses 35—38. Only in Luke.

Reminiscence of earlier times (ix. 3, x. 4).

36. Contrast of the time which has now come upon them, when the disciples, in an unfriendly, hostile world, are directed to self-help, and even to self-defence and strife.—*And he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one*: The ambiguity of the Greek (lit. "He that hath not, let him sell his garment and buy a sword") is thus correctly removed. The saying itself must be understood figuratively, as in Mark x. 34.

37. *The things concerning me have an end*, should be "My affairs are approaching the end."—That which has befallen the Master, according to Is. liii. 12, will also befall the disciples.

38. Misunderstanding on the part of the disciples who had taken with them two swords out of the house when they went out into the night.—*It is enough*: enough want of understanding, enough of disappointment, of speaking and teaching, and of life.

Verses 39—46 = Mark xiv. 32—42.

43, 44. Only in Luke. In some very old MSS. these verses are not found. The contents belong to later legend.

Verses 47—53 = Mark xiv. 43—50.

48. The older account in Matt. xxvi. 50 is different.

49. Only in Luke.

51. Only in Luke. This account of the healing is a later legend, but probably refers only to the healing of the wound, not the restoration of the ear that was cut off.

52. *Chief priests and captains of the temple and the elders*: These are erroneously supposed to be present: different in Matt. xxvi. 55.

53. *Power of darkness*: The third Evangelist has, from ver. 3 onwards, referred the whole treachery to diabolical influence. We have also at the same time the contrast between evil creeping in darkness and the powers of good delighting in publicity and the free light of heaven.

Verses 54—62 = Mark xiv. 53, 54, 66—72.

58. *Another*: [the Greek is masculine, showing that a man is here referred to;] according to Matt. xxvi. 71 = Mark xiv. 69, a maid.

59. *About the space of one hour after*: rather, according to Matt. xxvi. 73 = Mark xiv. 70, directly after.

61. *The Lord turned*: but, according to Matt. xxvi. 69 = Mark



xiv. 66, Peter was standing "without" and "beneath," whilst Jesus was being examined in an inner chamber further up.

Verses 63, 64 = Mark xiv. 65.

In Matt. and Mark it is the masters, in Luke the servants, who are guilty of this sin.

Verse 65. Only in Luke.

Verses 66—71 = Mark xiv. 55—64.

66. *As soon as it was day*: By the immediate introduction of Peter's denial first (55—62), the third Evangelist puts the examination, which took place while it was still night, later than in Mark xiv. 55, that is to say, he carries it on into the morning.

67, 68. Only in Luke. Whereas the terms "Messiah" and "Son of God" are originally synonymous (Matt. xxvi. 63 = Mark xiv. 61), Luke separates them on the ground of his representation of the Christ, and only introduces the condemnation for blasphemy (70, 71) on the confession of divine Sonship (in the sense of i. 35). Jesus tries, however, to escape the answer to the first question by taking it in the sense of the Pauline Gospel, according to which Christ is not so much the Messiah of the Jews as Son of God and Saviour of the world.

68. *If I also ask*: i.e. if I as master ask you as pupils. Comp. xx. 3, 44.

69. Points to the future, which will give a practical answer to the question proposed, and at the same time will establish its meaning aright.

70. *Ye say that I am*: "Ye say it, for I am."

## CHAPTER xxiii.

Verses 1—5 = Mark xv. 1, 2.

1 = Mark xv. 1.

2. Only in Luke. Detail of the political accusation. The lie is manifest from xx. 25. Ancient Latin translators and Marcion further read here, "and destroying the law and the prophets," "and perverting women and children." [Comp. ver. 14.]

3 = Mark xv. 2.

4, 5. Only in Luke.

5. *Were the more fierce*: lit. "grew strong," i.e. "became more violent."—*From Galilee*: Threatening recollections of Acts v. 37

are called up in the mind of the governor by the mention of Galilee.

Verses 6—16. Only in Luke.

Though only found in the third Gospel, this section is made up from older materials.

7. *Unto Herod's jurisdiction*: see note on Matt. ii. 22.

8. See note on ix. 9.

9. After Mark xv. 4, 5.

10. After Mark xv. 3.

11. *A gorgeous robe*: "a white robe" [the literal meaning of the Greek is "shining"]; a royal robe (comp. Acts xii. 21) put on him in mockery. Changed form of the description in Mark xv. 17, which is not found in the third Gospel.

12. The enmity consisted in the attitude of the Jewish ruler towards the Roman. The friendship followed from the attention which was shown to Pilate by delivering Jesus up to him.

15. *Is done unto him*: "has been brought against him." ["Has been done by him," *Alford, De Wette, Meyer, &c.*]

16. Development of this in John xix. 1, 4. The scourging is intended to satisfy the wrath of the priests in place of the crucifixion.

Verses 17—23 = Mark xv. 6—14.

19. See note on xiii. 1.

Verses 24—26 = Mark xv. 15, 21.

Verses 27—31. Only in Luke.

27. *Bewailed*: after Zech. xii. 10—14.

30. After Hosea x. 8. Comp. Rev. vi. 16.

31. After Ezek. xx. 47 (xxi. 3 in the Heb.).

Verses 32—38 = Mark xv. 22—32.

33. [*Calvary*: The Greek word is "Kranion" (a skull), the same that is employed in the interpretation of "Golgotha" in Matt. xxvii. 33, Mark xv. 22, John xix. 17. In Luke it stands alone, as if it were the proper name of the place, and in the Vulgate we find consequently Calvaria (a skull), which our translators retained in the Anglicised form of "Calvary."]

34. The third Evangelist, avoiding the oldest of the sayings of Jesus upon the cross (see Matt. xxvii. 46 = Mark xv. 34), introduces from later tradition three new ones. The first, after Is.



liii. 12, is an application of the maxim in vi. 28. It is alluded to in Acts iii. 17, and we find it again in the mouth of the dying Stephen, Acts vii. 60, and, according to Eusebius, in the mouth of James before his execution.

35. The third Evangelist, having omitted the evidence given against Jesus, the substance of which he gives in another form in Acts vi. 11—14, also omits here the allusion to it which is found in Matt. xvii. 40 = Mark xv. 29.

38. The statement that the inscription was in three languages has probably been inserted here from John xix. 20.

#### Verses 39—43. Only in Luke.

This is inconsistent with the older account, Matt. xxvii. 44 = Mark xv. 32.

42. *Into thy kingdom* should be "in thy kingdom." The thief, who represents repentant heathenism, holds already the later belief in a return of the Messiah "in his kingdom" (the same expression as in Matt. xvi. 28), which should far more than counterbalance the dishonour of a malefactor's death.

43. *In paradise*: This Persian word ("pleasure garden") is used in the Greek version of the Old Testament for the garden of Eden (Gen. ii. 8). Later it was used for the dwelling-place of the pious in the under-world, as distinguished from hell (xvi. 22, 26).

#### Verses 44—46 = Mark xv. 33—38.

45. [*The sun was darkened*. Three ancient MSS. read, "For the sun was eclipsed."] An eclipse of the sun at the time of full moon, when the passover was held, is impossible.

46. The last utterance after Ps. xxxi. 6.

#### Verses 47—49 = Mark xv. 39—41.

48. Only in Luke.

49. *All his acquaintance*: detailed statement in John xix. 25.

#### Verses 50—56 = Mark xv. 42—47.

54. *The Sabbath drew on*: What we reckon as six o'clock in the evening of the previous day, would be the beginning of the Sabbath according to the Jewish method of counting the days.

56. Only in Luke. Both an offence against the strict Jewish observance of the Sabbath and a contradiction of Mark xvi. 1,

according to which the women did not begin to prepare for embalming the corpse until after the Sabbath had passed.

#### CHAPTER xxiv.

Verses 1—10 = Mark xvi. 1—8.

3—5. Only in Luke.

6. New form of Matt. xxviii. 6, 7 = Mark xvi. 6, 7. Instead of the disciples being directed to go into Galilee, they are reminded of what Jesus had said to them in Galilee, i.e. of words which, if they had really been spoken, would have rendered the present ones superfluous.

7, 8. Only in Luke.

9. *Told all these things*: the contrary in Mark xvi. 8.

Verses 11, 12. Only in Luke.

The second of these verses is wanting in many ancient Latin and Syriac MSS.

Verses 13—53. Only in Luke.

13. *Furlongs*: lit. "stadia." A village of Emmaus is pointed out in a charming neighbourhood about seven miles west of Jerusalem. After the destruction of Jerusalem, Roman soldiers were settled there, and from that time the place is spoken of as a colony. Another Emmaus lies half way between Jerusalem and Joppa. It was there that Judas Maccabeus defeated Gorgias (1 Macc. iii. 40, 57, iv. 3).

18. Cleopas = Cleopater.

21. *And besides all this, &c.*: lit. "But indeed to-day he is spending the third day since these things happened."

30. A remembrance of xxii. 19. *Blessed it*: "gave thanks" [or more strictly, "offered a blessing"].

34 = 1 Cor. xv. 5.

36. A unique appearance to all the disciples, and moreover in Jerusalem, which, according to Acts i. 8, is to be the centre from which the Church is to develop. Matthew, on the other hand, though he has also a single appearance to all the disciples, places it in Galilee (Matt. xxviii. 16 sq.). The words of Jesus are wanting in some of the western MSS. Perhaps they are taken from John xx. 19.

39. *Hands and feet*: because they had been nailed to the cross,



and still showed the marks of this. The third Evangelist assumes a tangible and bodily resurrection. See p. 50, and note on ver. 50, below.

40. This verse, like the words of Jesus in ver. 36, is wanting in some of the western MSS. Perhaps it is taken from John xx. 20.

41. *Any meat*: i.e. anything to eat.

42. *And of an honeycomb*: wanting in the oldest MSS.

44. *And in the Psalms*: mentioned because, in the Jewish division of the Old Testament, the third division began with the book of Psalms.

49. *With power from on high*: i.e. with the Holy Spirit, at Pentecost, Acts i. 4, 8, ii. 1 sq. The command to remain steadfast at Jerusalem is in direct contradiction to Matt. xxviii. 7 = Mark xvi. 7, according to which the disciples go at once into Galilee, and do not see the risen One till after they arrive there.

50. *Out as far as to Bethany*. According to this account, Christ shows himself after his resurrection before all the people in the streets, and on the high road.

51. *And carried up into heaven*: wanting in some old Latin MSS.

52. *Worshipped him and*: similarly doubtful.

## THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

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THE peculiar character of the Fourth Gospel as contrasted with the first three has been acknowledged by the Church itself in all ages. In the ancient Church it was known in distinction from the first three as "the spiritual Gospel." Luther calls it "the one, tender, chief Gospel." Herder speaks of it as "the echo of the older Gospels in the upper choir." The Church was right. The purely spiritual nature of the Christian religion, and at the same time its universality, are brought forward in it with unique power (iv. 21—24, x. 16, xvii. 21). But its peculiarity consists in something more than a different, a loftier and a more honourable conception of the Redeemer and the history of the redemption. The very substance of the Gospel narrative is here in many respects essentially different. Not only do we find in the Gospel according to John different speeches in the mouth of Jesus, which seldom accord with the words reported in the first three Gospels, but the Johannine Christ himself moves in an entirely new circle of ideas. Some of the events narrated are altogether different, others contain the material of the first three Gospels completely transformed. The whole historical frame of the life of Jesus is changed. Moreover, the change is intentional.

### 1. THE OBJECT OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

Even without the express assurance of the writer, it would be plain enough that the Gospel according to John is a work cast in one mould, and fashioning all the historical material so



that it may best serve the purpose of one ruling idea. But just as Luke expressly states his purpose in his prologue (i. 1—4), so does the fourth Evangelist state his with the utmost clearness in the epilogue (xx. 31): "But these signs have been written in order that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through faith ye may have life in his name." According to xx. 30, tradition afforded the writer much other material, further "signs," i.e. acts which showed his divine nature and mission; but he wishes to write a Gospel of *selected* narratives, a Gospel of the decisive crises in that great episode in the history of the world, the life of Jesus, a Gospel which both in general and in the minutest details shall serve the purpose of awakening a belief in Jesus as the Christ, as the "Son of God." Jesus is to him a divine personality, descending from heaven to dwell here below for a season as a man, and then returning to his former state. Moreover, this divine personality is to him the bearer of complete salvation. The purpose of the writer is to represent in a living historical picture a doctrine concerning Jesus, the outlines of which are found in the theological conceptions of the age, which were drawn in part from Greek philosophy. For this very reason he is able to leave on one side a great deal of historical material. He only selects what appears to him most distinctive of the Son of God descending from above. His historical materials are to him nothing but materials, and he uses them with absolute freedom. While he retains the actual history of the fortunes of Jesus as a whole, he does not scruple to change altogether the position and connection both of his acts and his words, to place at the beginning that which only took place later, and at the end that which occurred at the beginning, and even to develope complete new narratives from the scattered hints of his predecessors, e.g. the resurrection of Lazarus from Luke xvi. 31. If we compare John i. 35—51 with Mark i. 16—20, John vi. with Matt. xiv. 13—27, or John xiii. 1—20 with the account of the last supper in the first three Gospels, we shall see that the writer deals with the historical material handed down to him, as a poet, except that

he is guided not only by artistic, but still more by religious considerations arising from the necessities of Christian faith in his own age. The fact is transparent enough that he regards the conception of the person of Jesus which he himself represents with the highest and purest enthusiasm, and sets before us with perfect freedom in the form of an historical picture, as the only true Christian conception. Nothing will satisfy him short of the confession to which the feeble disciples at last attain, "*My Lord and my God*" (xx. 28). In the writer's time this view of Christ was by no means the only one recognized. On the contrary, many represented him as more human, while a considerable number regarded him as a being who came from a higher world, but who had not actually become a man, but only taken the appearance of humanity in Jesus. It is evident that the writer looked upon both these views as errors which must be overcome. And we may reasonably suppose that he was spurred to the composition of his Gospel by the fact that none of those already existing (and he must at any rate have had our first three) sufficed for his purpose, and that he aimed at securing by means of his own Gospel, with its higher conception of the nature of Christ, a victory for the Church over these very errors. He succeeded in this, not only on account of the high intrinsic value of his work, but also because his representation fell in with the tendency of the age, and because the Church required a Gospel which should speak in loftier language of the person of Jesus—a requirement which may be plainly perceived from Heb. i. 3, Col. i. 15—18, and of which we find some indications at an earlier period, Phil. ii. 6—8.

The above considerations enable us to determine the *class of readers* for which the writer intended his work. It is no manual of information or attractive discourse for non-Christians. Indeed no Gospel was written at all for "those who are without" (1 Cor. v. 12, 13). On the other hand, it is by no means written exclusively (see p. 208) for a narrow circle of disciples who had been initiated into secrets to be concealed from others; for although a



distinction is made between the things which Jesus said in parables and those things which he said freely to all (comp. xvi. 25, 29), yet with the departure of the Lord, which is regarded as the condition of the advent of the Spirit, came the hour of complete knowledge *for all* (xvi. 13). Nor, again, does it appear that the writer had only a part of the Church in his mind, say the region immediately surrounding his own home in Asia Minor. On the contrary, the Christ of this Gospel occupies a commanding position in the great history of humanity, and the gaze of the writer is accordingly directed first of all to the union of all believers (xvii. 21, 22), and in the second place to the completion of the flock without reference to nationality (x. 16). He desires to give such a picture of the life and principles of Jesus as will satisfy true "Israelites" (i. 40 sqq.) and longing Greeks (xii. 20) alike. On a foundation which is intentionally made as broad as possible, in the consciousness that he is engaged in a work that marks an era in the history of the world, he writes a spiritual Gospel for all Christendom.

## 2. DATE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

The date of the composition of the Fourth Gospel may be pretty accurately determined. That it is one of the latest of the New Testament writings is tolerably evident, in the first place, from its teaching as to the nature of Christ. The Jewish Christians originally regarded Jesus as a man endowed with divine powers, who, being thus endowed, is exalted so that divine attributes may also be assigned to him (Rev. i. 17, 18). Paul regards Jesus as above all else the redeeming manifestation of the second (spiritual or heavenly) man (1 Cor. xv. 45—47). The Fourth Gospel makes the divine nature of the Redeemer the centre and starting-point of his teaching, and from this highest point of view he re-constructs the earthly life of Jesus. In these two views we see the beginning and the conclusion, for a time, of a complete history of the primitive Christian idea of Christ. The interme-

diate stages, which may be traced with tolerable clearness even in detail, represent Christ as "in the form of God," or as the image of God, in the sense that he is the first fruits of the whole creation, and in fact the mediator and the goal of the whole work of creation (comp. Phil. ii. 6; Col. i. 15—18; Heb. i. 2, 3, &c.); but it is not until the Fourth Gospel appears that we find the complete and distinct conception of Christ as the pre-existent eternal Son of God, who, as being God (i. 1), was before Abraham (viii. 58), who was with God in glory before the foundation of the world (xvii. 5), and through whom all things were made (i. 3). The importance of this step in relation to ecclesiastical opinion as to the nature of Christ is evident. And it is equally evident that such a work could only find its place in the history of the development of Christian thought at a time when, on the one hand, the latter itself demanded a complete logical and definite representation of the Christian idea of salvation, and, on the other hand, the evangelical tradition was not yet fixed, so that the Gospels which already existed did not yet claim to be regarded as absolutely binding.

Further indications of the date of the Fourth Gospel are found in the relation in which it stands to the *Gnostics*, as they are called, i.e. Christians who suffered the moral and religious nucleus of Christianity, diluted in large measure with non-christian elements, to evaporate in fantastic thoughts and images, and who separated the celestial Redeemer Christ from the earthly individuality of Jesus with its human history, in such a way that the whole historical activity of Jesus degenerated into a mere pretence. In the First Epistle of John, the reference to the Gnostics and in fact to the very point just mentioned, is indisputable (1 John ii. 22, iv. 2, 3). The expression "*to become flesh*" (John i. 14), which lies at the very foundation of the Fourth Gospel, and other characteristics—as, for example, the name of *man* which the only-begotten applies to himself (viii. 40), and the statement, in which this Evangelist deviates from the narrative of the Synoptics, that Jesus himself bore his cross (see note on xix. 17),



indicate a conscious opposition to Gnostic errors. Moreover, the whole sphere of thought in which the Evangelist moves shows a striking familiarity with the Gnostic ideas. Hence the sharp opposition between God and the world, above and beneath, light and darkness, the children of God and the children of the devil; hence also the designation of the Son of God as the only-begotten; and hence the common use of the words, Father, Logos (Word), Beginning, Life, Truth, Grace, Paraclete, Fulness. These terms point especially to the system of Basilides, which was in its zenith in the time of Hadrian (117—138) and which, there can be no doubt, threw the Christian community into a state of great excitement and fear lest it should be contaminated by his ideas.

The office and the name assigned to the Spirit also point to the same period. It is called "Paraclete" (xiv. 16, 26, xv. 26, xvi. 7), i.e. helper or advocate [A.V. Comforter], and appears as a substitute for the Son who has returned to the Father, and as the continuer of his work, while the expectation of the return of Christ retires altogether into the background. All this points to the Montanism which flourished in Asia Minor towards the middle of the second century. The Montanist school clung convulsively to the prophecies of the apostolic age, similarly designating the Spirit Paraclete, but at the same time passionately desiring to see the prophesied end of the world. In contrast to these stormy spiritual impulses, the Fourth Gospel represents the clear and sober influence of the Spirit, which since the departure of the Lord has dwelt with those who are his, and leads them into all truth.

A further indication of the period of the composition of the Fourth Gospel is found in the remarkable fact that it places the death of Jesus on the 14th of the month of Nisan, i.e. the day *before* the great day of the Passover (xviii. 28) (whereas the three first Gospels represent his death as taking place on the day of the feast); that the institution of the Lord's Supper on the occasion of the last paschal supper is entirely set aside, and we find only an account of a farewell meal (on the 13th of Nisan) as the

last token of his love for his disciples (xiii. 1). This is explained by the dispute which arose in Asia Minor in the second century concerning the celebration of the Passover. The Jewish Christians held strictly to the ancient tradition, and, like the Jews, celebrated the Passover on the 14th of Nisan. They appealed for their authority to the Gospel of Matthew and—to the usage of the apostle John. The Pauline Christians would have nothing to do with a Jewish festival (comp. Col. ii. 16, 17). Why keep a Jewish Passover when Christ had been slain for us all as the true paschal lamb (1 Cor. v. 7)? At a later date, towards the end of the second century and in a somewhat different form, this question became of very considerable importance, when Rome advocated the independent celebration of a Christian Easter festival in opposition to the narrow custom of the Jewish Christians of Asia Minor. And we must place the origin of the Fourth Gospel at the beginning of this dispute, seeing in it, as we do, an evident desire to counterbalance the authorities for a paschal feast which was Jewish rather than Christian. The testimony of Matthew is undermined by the testimony of the disciple "whom the Lord loved." The paschal lamb of the Jews loses all significance, since Jesus is himself the paschal lamb (xix. 36), slain at the very time when the Jews slew their lambs. The parting meal of Jesus and his disciples, so far from being itself the paschal feast, had no connection with it at all. It is evident how the period of its composition explains the remarkable departures of the writer of the Fourth Gospel from a tradition which we cannot suppose to have been unknown to him.

Again, if the prediction of Jesus (v. 43), that the Jews will receive another who *will come in his own name*, is to be interpreted of any definite event, none is more suitable than the rising of the Jews under the emperor Hadrian (130—135 A.D.), when the Messianic pretender, Bar-Cochba, the "Son of the Star," as he called himself in allusion to Numb. xxiv. 17, succeeded in exciting the Jews to a last desperate struggle, and in sweeping them along with him to destruction. If the reference to this



event is established, then the Fourth Gospel must have been composed between the years 135 and 150. About the year 180, it is referred to in Theophilus and Irenæus under the name of John. But we find evidence of its use from the year 170 onwards, not only in the Fathers, but even in the Jewish-Christian Gnostic book of the Clementine Homilies (about 170), and indeed even in the heathen opponent of Christianity, Celsus (178). We have no sufficient ground for doubting that Justin Martyr was acquainted with the book (about 160). But when we go further back, we find its use by the Gnostic Basilides altogether uncertain, though, on the other hand, the author of the Shepherd of Hermas (about 150) and the aged Papias of Hierapolis (Euseb. iii. 39) appear to be acquainted with the First Epistle, which is closely connected with the Gospel; and some of the ideas contained in the Epistle of Barnabas (125—130) have such a strong resemblance to this Gospel, that in any case we cannot but regard them as near neighbours.

### 3. AUTHORSHIP OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

In the presence of all the indications enumerated above, that the Fourth Gospel was composed during the second quarter of the second century, it is impossible to suppose that it was written by the apostle John; for John would then have been nearly a century and a half old; this work, with all its intellectual freshness and vigour, full of the thoughts and interests of the second century, dealing so powerfully with the questions which the Church was then called upon to solve, would have been written by him in an old age such as is itself almost unheard of. Moreover, while the Revelation assumes that several of the apostles are already dead (xviii. 20, xxi. 14), Heracleon, writing in the second century, does *not* mention John among the apostles who died a natural death; and Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, speaks of his having been murdered by the Jews in the same manner as his brother James. But there are other and far weightier proofs

that the apostle cannot be the author of the Fourth Gospel. *The one circumstance that the Jewish Christians appealed to the authority of the apostle John in justification of their method of celebrating the paschal festival, while the so-called Gospel of John is distinctly opposed to their custom and their view, is itself decisive.* And again, a comparison of the Gospel with the Revelation is decisive. It is almost universally acknowledged to be impossible to ascribe to the same man a book bearing a Jewish-Christian stamp so plainly as the "Revelation of John," which appeared in Asia Minor about the year 70, and a book so entirely free from Judaism as the Fourth Gospel, which leaves the very question of the Pauline contest with the Law behind it. And what we know of the brother of James from other sources, reminds us more of the Revelation than of the free spirit of the Fourth Gospel. The position which Paul assigns to John (Gal. ii. 9) was taken up by him twenty years after the departure of Jesus. Is it to be supposed that altered circumstances and so-forth had so powerful an effect upon the "Son of Thunder" that the zealot for the law and ceremonial piety became in his extreme old age a direct opponent of the law as a Jewish institution which had entirely lost all meaning for Christians (John i. 17, vii. 22, &c.)?

But how came it that the writer of the Fourth Gospel chose such a "pillar" of Jewish Christianity, represented him as the authority for his thoroughly spiritual conception of the Gospel, and sheltered himself under his name?

The publication of the Revelation written in Asia Minor had contributed not a little to make the name of the apostle John celebrated in those regions, and to subject his memory to the processes by which pious and reverent legends are constructed. We may pass over for the present the question whether the "Revelation" first gave rise to the tradition of John's residence in Asia Minor, or whether it is rather to be regarded as early evidence of the fact that he actually did reside there for some time. In any case, tradition has uniformly delighted to represent this apostle as the last to depart from the earth, and to leave



the community finally bereft of all apostles. The oldest legends which we possess concerning the last of the apostles assign to him characteristics which are purely Judaistic. He stands forth in the memory of the Jewish Christians of Asia Minor as a high-priest bearing the distinguishing gold plate upon his forehead (Exod. xxviii. 36). How natural it was that the Gentile Christians also should endeavour in time to avail themselves of so great an authority, and to represent the last of the apostles encircled with such glory as *their* witness, taking him away, as it were, from their Judaistic opponents, and turning the picture of the zealot for the law into its exact opposite! And they were not without a point of connection at which to attach their own account to the original tradition. This already represented John, with his brother James, who died early, and Peter, as being particularly intimate with Jesus. John was regarded as a friend in whom the Lord had especially confided, and as a pillar of the Church, and this idea was strengthened and confirmed when he was thought of as the bearer of the revelation of those things which should shortly come to pass, and the revelation itself as personally delivered to him by the risen and glorified Christ (Rev. i. 1). But an intimate disciple of Christ, according to the Pauline view, could not be confined within narrow Jewish limits; on the contrary, he must represent a deeper and freer conception of Christianity. It was thus that Pauline Christianity created the John of the Fourth Gospel, who finds a suitable companion in the Peter of the First Epistle of Peter, also the product of the same Pauline spirit. And it was the more urgently driven thus to metamorphose the memory of the Jewish apostle in accordance with its own ideas, inasmuch as Paul himself, who was its proper support and authority, always suffered in the eyes of its opponents from the fact that he had not been an eye-witness of the acts of Jesus, nor an immediate disciple of the Lord. This defect was amply supplied by the disciple who lay in Jesus' bosom. Thus we understand how it was possible for an inhabitant of Asia Minor, writing in the second century, to select the Paulinised

John as the authority for his representation of the acts of Jesus.

Accordingly, the Fourth Gospel has not unfairly been called "the spiritual apocalypse" (Revelation of John). The Revelation stands undoubtedly in sharp contrast to the Fourth Gospel, not only in its Jewish-Christian tone and its resistance to a Christianity free from the law, but also in its intense expectation of the return of Jesus, which is replaced in the Fourth Gospel by the advent of the Spirit. Nevertheless, it contains some points of which the Gospel avails itself to form a connection between the two. Jesus Christ appears in the Revelation as the "faithful witness" (Rev. i. 5); he is called the "beginning of the creation of God" (iii. 14) and the "Word of God" (xix. 13). In like manner he appears in the Gospel as bearing witness to that which the Father has shown him (John iii. 11, 32); and if the phrase, first fruits of the creation of God, is here differently understood, and entirely new ideas are connected with the name "Word of God," the expressions are still the same, and the preparation of the Revelation renders them likely to gain a general acceptance. The work of the seer in the Revelation is spoken of as a "testimony" (Rev. i. 2, xxii. 16), and in the Fourth Gospel John appears as a "witness" to him who was made flesh (i. 14, xix. 35). These resemblances are certainly not accidental, but are consciously produced by the writer in the exercise of his creative art.

While the post-apostolic origin of the Fourth Gospel is thus by no means inexplicable, the supposition that it is the work of the apostle John, considering the manner in which the apostle himself is introduced in the Gospel, is altogether improbable. It is almost impossible to suppose that a disciple of the Lord, after the rebuke which Jesus administers in Matt. xviii. 1 sqq., Mark ix. 34 sqq., Luke ix. 46 sqq., could be so presumptuous as to speak of himself simply as the disciple "whom Jesus loved," or could deliberately thrust upon the reader's notice the superiority of his own position to that of Peter, as in chapters xiii. and xx. On the other hand, it is easy to understand how a third party, whose



purpose is to exalt John as highly as possible, can speak of him in this manner. It is scarcely conceivable, again, that any one would bear witness to anything in the fashion that we find in xix. 35. He would rather give his own name, speak in the first person, and give some further assurance that he has spoken the truth. The language here is just that of a writer who wishes to retire, as it were, behind the revered name of an apostle and let the latter appear upon the scene. He wishes to give an impression that he was intimately connected with him, but not that he was himself the apostle.

But the value of the writing is not dependent upon our knowledge of the author's name. The unknown writer has constructed a great and beautiful monument to Jesus and his apostle. And while there is much that is perishable in this book, which has hitherto been over-estimated from an historical and dogmatic point of view, its imperishable value lies in the impression that is made by this religious and philosophical picture, in the stress that is laid upon the personality of Jesus, perfect in religion, marking an era in the history of the world, in the portentous discovery of what was truly eternal and infinite in his work and influence in spite of the historical limits of its first appearance, and finally in the triumphant boldness with which it represents, after a new fashion, to a new century, and indeed to the succession of the centuries, the infinite worth and superiority of Jesus.

And now of the theological conceptions of the writer we know this much: the Evangelist is so much of a theologian and philosopher, that instead of beginning straightway with his history, he opens his work with a statement of his doctrine concerning God and the world. To him, God and the world are, to speak shortly, two opposites which are in some respects eternally exclusive of each other.—God, the one “only true” God (i. 1, x. 29, xiv. 28, xvii. 3), is the Hidden, the Unknown (i. 18, v. 37, vi. 46, 1 John iv. 12); at best we can only call Him Life (v. 26, vi. 57), Spirit (iv. 24), Him who worketh (v. 17).—Opposed to Him, as the dark is opposed to the light (i. 5, iii. 19), the lower to the

higher (viii. 23), stands the earthly world, with its offspring of flesh and blood, its lusts and wickedness (i. 13, iii. 6, 31, viii. 44; 2 John ii. 16, v. 19). The reconciliation of these two infinite opposites is found in the *Logos*, i.e. the "Word" or Speaker of God (iii. 34, v. 38, vi. 63, viii. 37, 43, x. 19, 21, 35, xvii. 8, 14, &c.), which exists from the beginning, is in communion with God, and is itself God, although not *the* God, and having only a life derived from Him (i. 1, 18, v. 26). This is the personal executive power carrying out the designs of God (v. 17, 19, viii. 26, 28, xii. 49), the architect of the world, the light and life of the world (i. 3, 4, 9), though the world, because of its darkness, continually resists the light (i. 5, 10), produces a two-fold offspring of the lower and higher (viii. 23), and from the first supports in the person of the devil the murderer of men and the leader of rebellion against God (viii. 44).

This theology, which is blended most skilfully with the history of Jesus as the *Logos* which has been made flesh and overcomes the world, is no other than the prevailing Jewish theology of that age, which reached its classic termination in Philo, the famous Alexandrian Platonist, a contemporary of Jesus himself, which owes its diffusion in Christendom more to the Fourth Gospel and the Epistle to the Hebrews, and afterwards to the Fathers, than to Paul, and which has supplied the most important supports of the doctrine of the deity of Christ. It is true that the elements of this doctrine of the *Logos* may be found as far back as the Old Testament, where the creative word of God is introduced in Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms, and moreover, that this "Word" is more and more distinctly identified with the "Wisdom" of the latest books, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch and the Wisdom of Solomon, as one personal being, and made the upholder of the life of the world and the nations (comp. Gen. i. 3 sqq., Psalm xxxiii. 6, Isaiah lv. 10 sq., Job xxviii. 12 sqq., Prov. viii. 14 sqq., ix. 1 sqq., Ecclus. xxiv., Baruch iii. 9 sqq., Wisd. vii. 22 sqq.); nevertheless, it becomes plainer and plainer that the complete development of this doctrine, the definite



moulding of it amid numerous and to some extent verbal coincidences with the doctrine of the Fourth Gospel, is first found in the doctrine of Philo, with which the amplifications of the Book of Wisdom and the later Jewish literature are more or less closely connected. And indeed the direct use of the very words of Philo on the part of the Fourth Gospel is more than probable.

#### 4. PRINCIPLES OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

On the basis of the views above described is erected a doctrine of salvation, the essential principles of which are as follows :

The gospel is the fulness of the divine revelation. Grace and truth have come into being in all their fulness through Jesus Christ, and have put an end to the law which was given through Moses. Jesus Christ has brought the truth, the words of God himself. He was able to do this because he is not of the earth, but came down from above. He who bears the spirit in himself without measure, has come upon earth and taken upon himself our flesh in order that he may establish the true worship corresponding to the pure spiritual nature of God, and this is brought about chiefly by the witness which he bears to himself as the way, the truth and the life. But his testimony has no prospect of winning all. The human world is divided. Some are of the truth and hear his voice. Others are votaries of evil, blinded servants of Satan, the present powerful prince of the visible world, whom the Son of Man has come to deprive of his kingdom. While, then, the former, by a spiritual union with the manifested Word, receive into themselves eternal life so that they cannot die, the latter, in growing hostility, in which the judging or separating power of the Word is tried and found sufficient, meet with eternal death or destruction. The work of the Incarnate has been completed on the cross, in the sense that the manifestation of his glory has reached its highest point in his departure from the world to the Father, but not in the sense that the divine work of revelation has now terminated. On the contrary, the revelation in the flesh

is only the foundation of a much more direct and spiritual influence of God. The glorified Christ sends, what he could not fully impart while he was "in the flesh," the Spirit, as the divine power which carries on without ceasing the spiritual work in his disciples. And it is only under the unrestricted influence of the Spirit that it is possible to attain the full knowledge of the truth, as the only-begotten had brought it from the Father, and the true and profound union with God which the only-begotten himself enjoyed. This is the meaning of the application of the term "the life" to the Johannine Christ: the contact of humanity with the full stream of divine living power, a contact granted to man through the incarnation of the Son of God, and itself direct, present and never-ceasing.

In i. 11—13, the writer gives us a concise summary of the earthly life of the only-begotten. He comes to his own possession, and by the greater part of those who are his he is not received; but those who do receive him he makes children of God. The *design* and *divisions* of the work itself correspond to this summary even in details. The design of the work is to represent on the one side the manifested Son of God revealing himself ever more and more fully, and on the other side the world and the believers in their relation to his revelation. This representation is completed in three stages. First we have a picture of the Son of God entering into the world as the bearer of perfect grace and truth. We see how his coming is announced, how he then appears and announces himself, and how he is received by the world. This division extends from i. 1 to iv. 54, and is subdivided into two sections, the first of which is introductory. This first section, commonly called the proem (i. 1—18), goes back, as was essential to the fourth Evangelist's representation of Christ, to the position of things before the entry of the Word into flesh, in order that the writer may then set before us this incarnation itself as the great crisis in the revelation of God to man. The second division extends from v. 1 to xii. 50. Here the Redeemer displays his glory in increasing measure and in various directions; but the



further the work of overcoming the world is carried towards its completion, the greater are the difficulties which arise through the more and more definite hostility of the world, culminating at last in the determination to kill him. Now we reach the third stage. His hour has come to depart. And when, as the true paschal lamb upon the cross, he has taken away the sins of the world, and so become the fount of its eternal salvation (xix. 34, 35), he leaves the world to return to the Father—a departure not of humiliation, but of the fullest glorification (xiii. 31, 32). Here the question of the position of the world, which in the prospect of the future winning of *all* (x. 16) itself receives to a certain extent a share of the glorification of Jesus, is thrown more and more into the background, and a new question is brought to the front, that of the relation of Jesus to his own, whom he is leaving, and of their relation to him. Thus this third division, in which lies the central point of the whole, has a more confiding and intimate tone, inasmuch as the writer here lets us see what Jesus is to his own, and especially what he is to the most loving and the most understanding among them, and the relation to him in which they stand and in which they are to stand. It is when he reaches this point that, in the full glow of his religious enthusiasm, the writer gives us what is most entirely his own. This third division extends from xiii. 1 to xx. 31. For chapter xxi. is a later addition. It is evident that the Evangelist concludes his work with xx. 30, 31.

The writer has himself distinguished these three divisions by grouping the different parts of his narrative around three Passovers, which are by no means to be received as definite dates, but the symbolic signification of which must for that very reason be regarded as of all the greater importance (comp. ii. 13, 23, vi. 4, xi. 55, xii. 1, xiii. 1).

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

### CHAPTER i.

#### Verses 1—18. Proem.

The intention of this proem is to show us Jesus as an essential link in the connection between God and the world, as the climax and goal of the whole of the old and new course of the world's development. The form into which this is thrown is an account of the incarnation of the Word in Jesus Christ. The "Word" is regarded as a being occupying an intermediate position between the invisible God and the visible world which is widely separated from God. The Word is a personified instrument by means of which the whole energy of God acts upon the world, and hence the being by whom God reveals himself as working and speaking (v. 17 sqq., iii. 34). It is as this spokesman of God, who is the expression of the Divine will at the same time that he is the image of His being, that he is called the *Word*.

#### Verses 1—5.

The Word in relation to God and the world before the incarnation.

1. *In the beginning*: comp. note on xvii. 5. This does not mean that the Word was eternal, and therefore that it was *not made*; see on the contrary v. 26 (xviii. 37).—*With God*, i.e. most intimately connected with God, but yet subject to Him; comp. i. 18 ("in the bosom of the Father") and v. 19.—*The Word was God*; i.e. having a divine nature and essence, divine honour and energy.

2. *The same* should be "This."

3. Whether material things were only formed out of an obscure and confused original material (chaos) under the influence of the Word, or whether they were called into being out of nothing, cannot be decided from these words. The way in which the writer speaks of the world as worthless and separated from God



by its material nature, leads us to suppose that he shares with Philo of Alexandria the first of these opinions.

4. *In him was life*: i.e. the source of all life, both physical and spiritual.—*And the life*: the name of "Life" simply is given to him as the source of life. As such he is moreover the source of *light* to men (comp. ver. 9); there is no knowledge without him.

5. *Comprehended it not* should be "received it not."

#### Verses 6—13.

John sent by God as witness to the true light.

6. *There was a man sent from God*, strictly "a man sent from God was made;" i.e. a man entered into the world.

8. *That light*: "the Light," both times.

9. Another and probably more accurate translation of this verse is: "The true light which lighteth all men was coming into the world."

10. *He was in the world*: this must be distinguished from the statement that he "came" in verse 11. He both was and acted as the giver of light and life *before* his "coming," i.e. before his incarnation.—*And the world, &c.*: i.e. although (he was in the world and) the world was made by him, yet it did not recognize him. Here of course the human world is meant.—*Knew him not* should be "did not recognize him."

11. "He came to that which was his own, and they who were his own received him not." Possibly this verse is only an amplification of ver. 10, inasmuch as the world is his own, but it is more probable that the phrase refers to the "own people" of Ps. cxxxv. 4, viz. Israel.

13. The exalted possession of sonship, to which the Light that has appeared leads, is a spiritual possession springing purely from God. There is a birth from God which is not of the flesh (as the descent from Abraham, which the Jews esteemed so highly, was).

#### Verses 14—18.

The entering of the Word into humanity, the incarnation and its result.

14. *Was made*: "became." The entry into the world is more closely defined; it is an *incarnation*. In 1 John iv. 3, the expression "to come in the flesh" is used, and the incarnation is neither

intended to mean nor can mean anything more than this.—*Dwelt*: more exactly “he pitched his tent” i.e. he made the Old Testament symbol of God’s dwelling among his people in the tabernacle of the covenant an actual fact, bringing salvation to us.

15. This verse should be rendered “John beareth witness of him, and hath cried aloud, This was he of whom I said, He that cometh after me became before me, for he was before I was.” John bears witness aloud to the greatness of him who has appeared in the flesh (i. 30). He recognizes him as having existed before him.

16. “And of his fulness have we all received grace upon grace.” The receipt of superabundant and ever-increasing grace from his fulness is in like manner a testimony on the part of all who are his.

17. *By Moses . . . by Jesus Christ*: “through Moses . . . through Jesus Christ.”

#### Verses 19—28.

The forerunner directs the inquiring Jews to him who already stands in their midst.

21. According to Jewish expectation, Elijah was to precede the Messiah (Mal. iv. 5). Comp. note on Matt. xi. 14, xvii. 12.—*That prophet* should be “the prophet,” here and in verse 25, i.e. the second Moses (Deut. xviii. 15; comp. John vi. 14). John explains to the Jews that he has nothing to do with their expectations.

24. The Pharisees are mentioned as the fiercest opponents (xi. 47, xii. 19).

25. *That prophet*: see note on verse 21.

28. *Bethabara*: probably we should read “Bethany,” distinguished, however, from the place of the same name described in xi. 18, by the words “beyond Jordan.”

#### Verses 29—34.

John bears witness to Jesus as the Lamb of God.

31. John baptizes with water as a sign for Israel in order to direct them to the baptism with the spirit.

32—34. It is not till after he has borne witness of him that John recognizes Jesus by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him in the form of a dove, a sign that it is he that baptizes with



the Holy Spirit. That Jesus was baptized by John, and that he saw this at the time of the baptism, is not narrated here.

Verses 35—51.

The gathering of the first disciples. A complete reconstruction of Mark i. 16—20.

39. The two disciples of John, whose attention has been called by the testimony of their master, wish simply to see where Jesus is to be found; but he at once invites them to him, and the same day they recognize with rapture his Messiahship.—*The tenth hour*: four o'clock in the evening.

40. The one of the two disciples who is not named is supposed by many to be John, but without sufficient reason. Such incidental and unobtrusive mention would only be historically probable on the supposition that the Gospel was written by him.

42. The knowledge of the name of Simon, like the announcement of his future position as Peter, is to be regarded as a manifestation of the omniscience of Jesus, showing his divine origin (ii. 25). So also vi. 70.

45. Nathanael, usually supposed, without sufficient ground, to be Bartholemew, has more recently also been taken to be Matthew, or according to others Matthias. The name, though taken from the Old Testament (see, for example, Numb. i. 8, ii. 5), is only used by the fourth Evangelist, and only in this chapter (comp., however, xxi. 2). The meaning is "God gave him" (comp. vi. 37, xvii. 2, 6, 9), the same as the meaning of the name John, and we might more reasonably suppose that the Evangelist intends here to introduce the beloved disciple, i.e. John. The very significant calling, which plainly corresponds, even in the addition of a name indicating his spiritual nature, to the prominence given to the calling of Simon, harmonizes admirably with this view. If this is correct, we may then suppose that the unnamed disciple in vv. 35, 40, is James, the brother of John, whom the Evangelist cannot entirely pass over, considering how closely tradition connected him with John and Peter. But by deliberately omitting his name, he reduces him to an inferior position, and separates him from John, who was celebrated in the tradition of the second century, together with Philip, as the apostle of Asia Minor. It is in consequence of this connection

between the two that they are here united in their entry into the circle of disciples.

47. *An Israelite indeed*: truly an Israelite, in opposition to those who only pretended to be so, "the Jews," who are designated children of him who was a murderer and a liar from the beginning (viii. 44).

49. This confession is usually wrongly regarded as being made in a Jewish sense. According to the Evangelist, Jesus is the king of Israel, but not the king of the Jews (xii. 12—16, xviii. 33 sq.).

51. Nathanael receives the significant promise, reminding us of ver. 42, that he shall see "greater things." They will see Jacob's dream of the ladder from heaven fulfilled in Jesus, heaven opened over the Son of Man who has descended from heaven (Dan. vii. 13, 14), the ministering angels of God ascending and descending over him in whom as the true seed of Jacob all the tribes of the earth are blessed (Gen. xxviii. 14).

## CHAPTER ii.

### Verses 1—11.

The sign of the turning of water into wine.

1. *On the third day*: reckoned from the gathering of the disciples (i. 35); for the scene with Peter (i. 42, 43) must be regarded as taking place on the first day, and the scene with Nathanael on the second.

4. He will not act according to human wishes and considerations, but simply for the execution of the Divine counsel, which has its appointed hour for everything.

6. *After the manner of the purifying*: for the purpose of cleansing the hands and the vessels, according to Jewish custom, before and after a meal.

11. The first part of this verse should be "This Jesus did at Cana in Galilee as the beginning of his signs." The stress laid upon this miracle as the first (in opposition to Mark i. 23—27) shows that to the writer of the Gospel himself it is not merely the marvellous production of a physical phenomenon, but a miracle which is intended to represent symbolically the nature of him who thus appears among men, his "glory" and the purpose of his coming. Like almost all the other miracles of the Fourth Gospel, this first one is a symbol of his redeeming work. He



is the true Bridegroom (iii. 29). He is with his own as at a wedding. They rejoice with him until he is taken from them (xvi. 33, comp. Matt. ix. 15). He has for them abundance of the best wine which makes the heart rejoice, viz. words of eternal life (vi. 28). This powerful drink takes the place of the water of spiritless Jewish ceremonies (the pitchers for purification, ver. 6).

#### Verses 12—24.

The purification of the temple = Mark xi. 15—19, but here occupies a totally different place in the life of Jesus.

12. According to Matt. ix. 1, Capernaum is the head quarters of Jesus. The Fourth Gospel only represents him as staying a few days there; he hastens on to Jerusalem, the proper place for his manifestation of himself.

14. See note on Matt. xxi. 12.

17. See Ps. lxix. 9.—*Hath eaten me up*, should be “will consume me.”

20. The unhistorical character of this speech of Jesus is self-evident, for it was impossible for him to be understood either by the Jews or by his own disciples. In fact, he could not but be altogether misunderstood by them. On the other hand, we can easily see how a writer who is so fond of symbolism as our author, might connect the cleansing of the temple with the destruction and restoration of his body, which is also a holy tabernacle (i. 14), and might find in the latter a sign of his authority for the former.

23. *Believed in his name*: i.e. on account of the signs. It is a case of that belief because of miracles which he held in such slight esteem. Hence he does not entrust himself to them, and does not call them to him. The cleansing of the temple is also a symbolic transaction full of meaning. It expresses still more strongly the abolition of the Jewish worship by the Word which has been manifested. Comp. iv. 21—23 (Acts vi. 14).

#### CHAPTER iii.

#### Verses 1—21.

The exclusiveness and reserve of the chief of the Jewish rulers.

1. Nicodemus does not appear in the Synoptics. In the Fourth Gospel he appears again in vii. 50, xix. 39. In the Talmud we

find the name Nakdim (= The Excellent) as the title of a Rabbi Boni. It is possible that the Evangelist has used this name in a Greek form for the pattern representative of the Pharisees.

2. He comes at night because of the anger and hostility of the other Pharisees towards Jesus (iv. 1—3, vii. 52).

3. *Born again* should be "born from above." The knowledge of the kingdom of God requires a spiritual nature, a birth from above, i.e. produced by God and springing from the world above. In this saying the words of Mark x. 15 are metamorphosed into a new Johannine form.

5. Jesus gives a more detailed explanation of his first answer: A man can only enter the kingdom of God by being born of water and of the spirit: water being the symbol of purification (in baptism), and the spirit (of God) being the renewing power.

6. Earthly and sinful human nature can only produce its like. Only birth by the spirit can bring with it the spiritual nature, i.e. full and true life.

7. *Born again* should be "born from above."

8. *The wind bloweth where it listeth . . . so is every one that is born of the spirit*: In the original there is a play upon the word "pneuma," which means both "wind" and "spirit." The wind is beyond our control, and though we know its effects, we know neither its source nor its goal. So also the birth from the spirit, having its source solely in the will of God and leading to the higher world, is hidden in mystery and known only in its effects.

9. By this question Nicodemus shows himself to be a man entirely without experience of the influence of the spirit. Compare the contrast in ver. 11, where Jesus speaks in the name of himself and of those who believe in him.

10. *A master* should be "the master" [i.e. teacher].

12. Birth from the spirit is spoken of as belonging to the earth, inasmuch as it takes place in man. But Jesus could also say of heavenly mysteries belonging entirely to the other life, that these spiritual things must be *believed*, i.e. the testimony to them must be received as it comes from God.

13. *Which is in heaven*: This does not mean, who now dwells in heaven, or who has been there, but whose nature and life is in the higher world (comp. viii. 23).

14. Comp. Numb. xxi. 6—9.—*Lifted up*: first of all upon the



cross ; but the cross is for him a true uplifting, inasmuch as it brings him to heaven, showing at the same time the way to the Father, and confirming the statement that he descended from heaven.

16. It is upon the Son as the only Son sent out from the Father that every one must believe who will not be lost but will have eternal life. The longer the speech of Jesus continues, the more it passes into a meditation of the Evangelist.

19—21. The Fourth Evangelist regards *the judgment*, not as a sudden and external event, but as a spiritual process which began with the entrance of the Light, i.e. the Son of God, into the world. For it is by this that the hatred of the light, which testifies to the love of evil, has been manifested.

19. *Condemnation*: "judgment."—*Light . . . darkness . . . light*: "the light . . . the darkness . . . the light."

20. *Lest his deeds should be reproved* should be "lest he should be convicted of his deeds."

21. *That they are wrought in God*: "because they have been wrought in God."

#### Verses 22—36.

John's final testimony, before his departure, addressed to his unreceptive disciples.

22. *Came*: i.e. from Jerusalem.

24. In contradiction of Mark i. 14.

25. This verse should read: "Then there arose on the part of John's disciples a dispute with a Jew concerning purification." They dispute about purification by water, i.e. as to which is the right one, looking with jealousy upon Jesus' baptism, regarding it also as a baptism simply with water. (See i. 33.)

29. The community belongs to Jesus as his bride. The marriage-day has been depicted in ii. 1—11. And John hears with delight the bridegroom's cry of joy. His own joy is complete, for the desired hour is come.

30. It is reasonable that the lesser light should vanish in the light of the Sun that has now arisen. The one must take precedence of all others (ver. 31).

31—33. These verses should read, "He that cometh from above is above all. He that springs from the earth is of the earth and speaketh of the earth. He that cometh from heaven

testifieth what he hath seen and heard; and no man receiveth his testimony. But he who hath received his testimony hath set his seal to it that God is true."

31. He that springeth from the earth hath an earthly nature and speaketh in an earthly way, i.e. so that he cannot pass the limits of the earthly.

33. Here, again, the words of the speaker pass imperceptibly into a meditation of the writer (see note on ver. 16).

34. Only God's envoy speaks the pure and full divine word, out of the unmeasured fulness of the spirit.

#### CHAPTER iv.

#### Verses 1—42.

The promising Samaritan field of labour.

1. Jesus avoids the hatred and jealousy of the Pharisees.

5. *Sychar* must be Shechem (Gen. xlviii. 22; Josh. xxiv. 32), but it is difficult to say what is the cause of the curious change of name. It cannot be supposed to be a mistake on the part of the Evangelist, for the name of Shechem was familiar enough from the Old Testament, with which he is well acquainted. The meaning of the name Sychar is "Drinking Town," and it may have been an ironical name given by the Jews. It is more probable, however, that the Evangelist is alluding to Is. xxviii. 1—16, and intends to represent the Samaritan town as sunk in sensuality, as a place of heathen debauchery. It would then stand as parallel with the symbolic names Nathanael (i. 48), *Ænon* = "Place of Water" (iii. 23), Bethesda (v. 2), Siloam (ix. 7).

6. *The sixth hour*, i.e. the hour of noon.

12. *Art thou greater*, and canst thou consequently give us better water?

18. The reference to the polluted life of the Samaritan woman is probably to be understood, in accordance with the Evangelist's usual manner, not only individually but also symbolically of the Samaritan worship in earlier times (five heathen deities, 2 Kings xvii. 24—41). Afterwards they served Jehovah, but they are not lawfully wedded to him, for according to 2 Kings xvii. 34, they do not keep the law as they ought.

20. If the explanation of the writer's meaning which we have



just given be correct, it will also explain the turn which the conversation now takes.

22. Here we have the same thought as in Rom. iii. 2, ix. 4, 5. The latter passage seems to have been in the writer's mind.

23. This verse, like the preceding, has a parallel in Rom. xii. 1, 2.

24. *God is a spirit* should be "God is spirit." God is free from everything material involving imperfection.

34. *My meat*: that which fills and satisfies me.

35, 36. The word *already* at the end of 35 belongs to 36, so that we should read, "Lift up your eyes and look upon the fields, for they are white to harvest, and already the reaper receiveth his wages," &c.

35—38. At the time of sowing they cheered themselves with the proverbial saying, that the harvest was only four months distant. Here in the spiritual world the fields are already ripe for the harvest; the full harvest is close at hand. Under the figure of the rich first harvest in Samaria, the Evangelist represents the beginning and the pledge of the great approaching harvest on Samaritan (Acts viii. 5 sq.) and heathen ground generally, where the workers soon will only have to reap what other men, John, Jesus, the first apostles (and perhaps also Paul, the mighty pioneer in the conversion of the heathen, may here be referred to), have laboured in sowing. Thus we find an expression of joy at the spread of the gospel in non-Jewish regions placed in the mouth of Jesus.

40. While he is compelled to depart from Judea, he is invited to remain in Samaria. His own country, and even his Galilean home, do not know how to value him as these strangers do, with whom he tarries but a couple of days.

41, 42. The first imperfect belief, resting only on the fact of his superhuman knowledge, speedily deepens, and they can joyfully confess that they believe directly his word which they have found to be divine.

#### Verses 45—48.

The Galileans receive him, and thus appear to greater advantage than the Judeans, but they receive him only for the sake of the signs that they have seen him perform at Jerusalem. They keep desiring signs and ever new signs, and can never rise above

this paltry belief in signs. Even the nobleman, who represents the highest Jewish society in Galilee, cannot pass beyond it until the miraculous sign itself has been demonstrated to him even to the very hour. He is blamed (and similar blame attaches also to the Galileans generally), not for desiring miraculous help, but for asking Jesus to come down with him, as though it were impossible to conceive of any cure without this physical means. His power is non-existent to them unless there is something they can see and lay hold of; whereas, blessed are they who see not and yet believe (xx. 29). [The word here rendered *nobleman* is very vague, and simply means "one attached to the king or the court." Luther has rendered it by an equally vague term in German. It probably signifies an officer, civil or military, or perhaps simply a retainer at the court of Herod.]

#### Verses 47—53.

A reconstruction of Matt. viii. 5—13 = Luke vii. 1—10.

54. The third miracle which the Evangelist narrates as having taken place in Galilee is the feeding of the multitude which follows (ch. vi.). Corresponding to these three are three others, of which the scene is laid in Jerusalem (ch. v. ix. xi). We should notice the position of the Samaritans, with their readiness to receive the gospel, between the unimpressionable representatives of the law in Jerusalem and the Galileans who cannot rise above a faith which rests merely upon signs; and similarly the position of the Samaritan woman, who is so soon converted, between the unintelligent Nicodemus and the officer of the king whom it is so difficult to raise to real faith.

#### CHAPTER v.

Jesus manifests himself in Jerusalem as the Lord of the Sabbath, and as the imitator of the Father in divine works.

1. *A feast*: It is evident that the Evangelist does not intend to fix the date.—*Of the Jews*: Jesus does not take part in the feast as a Jew joining in its celebration, but he makes it an opportunity for manifesting himself to many.

2. *Sheep market* should be "sheep gate."—*Which is called* should be "with the surname."—There is no mention anywhere else of any pool called Bethesda. The Evangelist speaks of a



“surname” in distinction from the proper name. Probably he invented the surname himself in order to indicate how the place was made a “house of mercy” by the act of Jesus.

3. So far as we know, there was no pool in Jerusalem which served as a medicinal bath. There were only fountains and wells, or springs built in so as to form cisterns containing the springs. The spring of Gihon which Hezekiah thus enclosed (2 Chron. xxxii. 30), now known as the Fountain of the Virgin, was popularly regarded as especially mysterious. Its red colour and the rising and falling of the water excited the imagination. The steps were thus transformed into porches, and it was natural enough to attribute the moving of the water to heavenly powers, and to suppose that it had a healing efficacy.

3, 4. The second part of ver. 3 and the whole of ver. 4 (*waiting for . . . . whatsoever disease he had*) are probably an interpolation.

5—9. Reconstruction of Mark ii. 1—12.

17. Notice the violent and intentional denial of the ground on which the observance of the day of rest was based (Gen. ii. 2), which was of Jewish origin, but had passed into Christianity.

18. The accusation of making himself equal with God, he meets by the statement that he does nothing without the Father (vv. 19, 30), that the power which he has is given by the Father (20), and that the Father is his example in all that he does (19). This power, however, extends to the raising of the dead (21) and the execution of the judgment (22, 27, 30) as proper to his Messianic office.

25. Here a spiritual resurrection is spoken of; but in vv. 28, 29 follows the resurrection at the last day.

29. *Damnation*: “judgment.”

34. He only appeals to the human testimony of John in order to afford them a tangible ground for belief.

35. Ye have played childishly with his light, instead of seriously availing yourselves of it.

36. Here we have the key to the interpretation of the miracle of Bethesda, which stands like a vignette at the head of the discourse of Jesus to which it gives occasion. All the miracles which follow occupy similar positions.

37. God is spirit (iv. 24), but the Evangelist does not consider that this excludes the possibility of speaking of a *shape* of God.

39. You think (though erroneously as far as your ideas are concerned) that you have found in the Scriptures the way of life. You would have found it if you knew that they testify of me.

44. To the charge that he makes himself equal to God, he replies by charging them with seeking false honour, not that which is with God, but that which comes from men.

#### CHAPTER vi.

Jesus reveals himself as the true bread come from heaven.

1. This verse should read, "After these things Jesus departed into the region beyond the Sea of Galilee before Tiberias."

2—21. A reconstruction of Mark vi. 32—52.

3. *Went up into a mountain*, should be "went upon the mountain." The expression "upon the mountain" does not, however, refer to a definite or well-known mountain. The gospel tradition lays the scene of most of the especially significant acts in the life of Jesus "upon the mountain" (Matt. v. 1, xvii. 1, xxvi. 30).

11. *And when . . . set down*, should be, "And after he had blessed them he divided them among them that were set down," &c.

14. *That prophet*: the second Moses, who according to the rabbinical teaching was to be expected to repeat the feeding of the people with manna.

15. [*A mountain*: "the mountain," as in ver 3.]

19. *Furlongs*: strictly "stadia." [The stadium was 202 yards, or eighteen yards less than a furlong.] 25—30 stadia would be about three miles. Hence they were already in the middle of the lake, and we must not suppose that Jesus was walking on the shore, but upon the waves.

21. Jesus delivers his own swiftly and surely from storms and danger, having previously been near them with his help though invisible. This scene on the lake seems also to be distinctly intended to serve the purpose of an interlude between the miraculous feeding of the multitude and the discourse upon the true bread, in which his body appears free from all coarse materialism, so that we may not take what follows about eating his flesh in a material sense (comp. ver. 52).

22. *Stood* should be "had remained."—*Was* should be "had been."



26. Jesus accuses them of more than a mere desire of miracles, viz. sensual greed. Hence in ver. 27 they are directed to endeavour to obtain imperishable food.

27. *Sealed*: i.e. given him signs to confirm his authority, e.g. the feeding of the people which had just taken place, and which was to direct their thoughts to the true bread which had come from heaven.

32, 33. *That bread* should be "the bread." Not the manna of Moses, but he who came down from heaven, who is to bring life to the world, is the bread of God. And such he openly declares himself to be, ver. 35.

39. *At the last day*: This is most probably a later addition. It disturbs the sense of raising up spiritually, which alone is suitable here.—The same is the case with the addition, *And I will raise him up at the last day*, in vv. 40, 44, and again in ver. 54, where the addition distinctly interferes with the connection of what precedes with what follows.

40. The belief on the Son and the spiritual eating of the true bread are evidently regarded as one and the same thing.

48. *That bread*: "the bread."

50. *This*: Jesus himself.

51. Another characteristic of the true bread is, that it is a living bread, which is therefore capable of producing eternal life and preserving from destruction.

51—56. In these verses the way in which Jesus is the bread is stated, viz. by the surrender of his flesh. The harsh expression, that he gives his flesh to eat, the very harshness of which forces us to a spiritual interpretation, is straightway introduced with the greatest emphasis (vv. 51, 53, 54, 55, 56). No doubt there is at the same time an allusion to the symbol of the Lord's Supper.

55. *Meat indeed* should be "true (real) meat."—*Drink indeed* should be "true (real) drink."

57. *By the Father*: i.e. from Him as the source.—*He that eateth me*: to eat him and to eat his flesh are the same.

60. *Hard*: for those who understand his language carnally. These are they whom the Father does not draw (ver. 44), even though they be disciples (ver. 61).

62. *The offence*, or stumbling-block, will be removed when the Son of Man returns to heaven.

63. My words are to be understood spiritually. Understood carnally, they do not give life.—*Speak* should be “have spoken.”

65. *Except it were*: “except it be.”

66—69. A division takes place even among the twelve (70, 71). A reconstruction of Mark viii. 27—33.

68. *The words*: “words.”

69. *That Christ, the Son of the living God*, should be “the holy one of God.” See note on x. 36.

71. *Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon*, should be “Judas, son of Simon, of Karioth.”

#### CHAPTER vii.

The testimony of Jesus in Jerusalem as to the place whence he comes and whither he goes, and the reception with which his testimony meets.

2. The Feast of Tabernacles, which was at the same time both a harvest thanksgiving and a commemoration of Israel's dwelling in tents during the journey through the wilderness, falls in the autumn. Hence the Evangelist supposes that Jesus has remained for half a year in retirement in Galilee.—Jesus testifies to his people at this festival who it is that has pitched his tent among them, viz. one sent from God (vv. 16 sq.). The writer regards the Feast of Tabernacles and the dwelling in tents as pointing symbolically to him who was to come, who was to “pitch his tent” [A.V. “dwell”] in the flesh (i. 14). If, then, they will celebrate their Feast of Tabernacles aright, they must believe on him, whereas they actually do just the contrary. This may explain why it is that the Evangelist connects the appearance in Jerusalem with this particular festival, and why he specially names it, while in v. 1 he speaks simply of “a feast of the Jews.”

3. Hitherto only one striking miracle has taken place in Judea (see ver. 21), viz. the healing narrated in v. 5—9. And so there also he must show works which may serve as his credentials to those who are or desire to be his disciples, as he had done in Galilee. From this time Jesus actually displays his miraculous powers only in Judea. The demand here must be understood to be caused by the dissatisfaction felt by his brothers in blood, which itself springs from their want of faith (ver. 5). They are annoyed to see so many falling away and forsaking him (vi. 66), and defend their doubt as to his divine mission on this ground.



4. The signs in Galilee had been given, comparatively speaking, *in secret*, Jerusalem being regarded as the only place where they could properly be said to take place *openly*. Hence all the visits of Jesus to Jerusalem are made to take place at times when festivals are being held.

6. I cannot do it before the time appointed according to the counsel of God. You can choose your own time, having nothing to fear from the world.

8. *I go not up yet* should be "I go not up."—We must not suppose here that there is a sudden change of purpose for which there would be no ground. He does not go up in the ordinary way, as other men. Assuming an appearance under which he is not recognized by those who have come up to the feast (ver. 25), until he is made known to them by his mention of the healing of the man who had been diseased thirty-eight years, he suddenly appears in Jerusalem, where his enemies at first seek for him in vain. Not only in a secret but in a positively mysterious manner (comp. vi. 25), he is suddenly there. And this appearance, without any one knowing how or whence he is come, is intended to show the people of Jerusalem that they are altogether wrong in their assertion in ver. 27; for so mysterious a removal into their midst ought to be a sufficient proof for them, shadowing forth, as it were, the fact that he was sent from God.

11—13. *The Jews*: i.e. the zealots for the law, wish to kill him and make preparations for so doing (vv. 30, 32). The multitude who are despised by the zealots (ver. 49) are divided (40—44).

15. *Letters* = learning generally.

16. Jesus declares the substance of his teaching to have been received directly from God.

20. *Thou hast a devil*: i.e. "Thou art possessed."—*Who goeth about to kill thee*: The people say this because they do not recognize him as Jesus the Galilean.

21. The meaning is, not that Jesus has only performed one sign in Judea (comp. ii. 23, iii. 2, vii. 31), but rather that he has so far confined himself to one extraordinary sign which has astonished them all.

27. One of the opinions of the Jews concerning Christ was, that no one would know whence he came.

28. He who has sent me, from whom I went forth, is the true (sender), unknown indeed to you, who has a right to send his messenger into the world, and gives him the power to execute the purposes for which he is sent.

32. A distinct attempt is now made to lay hold upon him, but they are powerless, under some invisible restraint (comp. vv. 30, 44, viii. 20), because his hour is not yet come (ver. 33, and also viii. 59).

34. Jesus announces his speedy departure, his return to his home.

35. *The Gentiles* should be "the Greeks."

38. Comp. Is. lviii. 11. This figure is used in connection with the figure of drinking (ver. 37). The water which he gives will not only satisfy, but will become as streams proceeding from him.

41. *Shall Christ come* should be "ought Christ to come."

42. The people speak of the seed of David and of Bethlehem. It is possible that the Evangelist is willing to let the descent from David pass as a genuine sign, and only regards the coming from Bethlehem, which as a village is in no way superior to Nazareth, as a misunderstanding. But it is also possible that he only acknowledges the descent from David in a spiritual sense.

50. Nicodemus appears here, not as a believer, not even as half believing, but only as a lawyer who is very particular about the law, and who therefore seems just and fair as compared with his fellows who are blinded with hatred. We have here a companion piece to Acts v. 34—42, which seems indeed to have been in the Evangelist's mind. The figure of the Pharisee who gives comparatively the greatest honour to the truth, serves to render more striking the dark hostility of the "high-priests and Pharisees" (vii. 32), the main representatives of Judaism.

#### Verses vii. 53—viii. 11.

The defence of the adulteress. An ancient interpolation, foreign to our Evangelist, interrupting the connection of the discourses of Jesus without any justification, and probably inserted here *à propos* of viii. 15, 16. Comp. Luke xxi. 37, 38.



## CHAPTER viii.

1. *Unto* should be "upon."

5. Stoning was the penalty only in a special case. Here it is taken to be the general penalty for adultery.

6. *That they might have to accuse him*: that they might find some contradiction of the law to accuse him of, his tenderness towards sinners being known to them. The writing on the ground may perhaps be meant to signify the decision which he had already arrived at not to allow her to suffer the penalty. Comp., however, Jer. xvii. 13.

7. Jesus, by awakening the guilty consciences of his opponents, compels them to carry out his own merciful decision.

9. *Being convicted by their own conscience* should be omitted.

## Verses 12—59.

Jesus declares himself as the light of the world, which guides into the true freedom, and meets with the most hostile misunderstanding.—Jesus, the light of the world, is the prevailing thought throughout the whole of the controversy contained in this chapter.

12. *The light of life*: Life consists in perception.

13. They misinterpret his own saying (v. 31) and turn it against him. There he disclaims the right to bear witness alone of himself. But it is not he alone who bears witness of himself.

14. Of course he may also bear witness of himself, and his witness in his own case is valid and true, because he declares from his own deepest consciousness that which they do not know, and which no man can know without his testimony.

15. Your condemnation of me is determined by what is visible, by appearances alone.

16. I alone am capable of giving a true judgment, because I am not alone, but am one with the Father.

17. *True* should be "valid."

19. Comp. xiv. 7—9.

20. The treasury is probably chosen as the place for this speech for the sake of the contrast. There they bring to their God their earthly offering of money, and yet they say that they have the true (spiritual) God for their father.

22. The question of the Jews is to be understood ironically.

23. He declares his descent from the higher world, there being two worlds, a heavenly, invisible, real world, and an earthly (lower), visible and unreal one. Comp. p. 206.

24. *That I am he*: viz. the light of the world (ver. 12). So also in ver. 28.

25, 26. *Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning*, should be "That which I have also spoken unto you from the beginning." The answer to the question, Who I am, forms the substance of my whole speech, of all my public utterances from the beginning (i.e. not simply the beginning of his career as the Messiah, but the beginning of his work of revelation generally, so that the prophecies of the Old Testament, as proceeding from him, are also comprehended in "that which he has spoken"). It forms "also" the substance of that which I have spoken to you. (We may supplement these verses somewhat as follows: "It is the question, Who I am, that reveals the spirits of men in all ages. When it is answered, sentence is passed in the souls of men. And do ye drag me before your judgment-seat?") It is for me to censure and to judge many things in you. As for my own defence, that matters not. He who has sent me is true, and I speak (only) what I have heard, and therefore pure divine truth.

28. The lifting up signifies, in the first place, the lifting up upon the cross; but this itself is the way in which he is lifted up into heaven. See note on iii. 14.—[*I am he*: see ver. 24.]

30—32. Belief is here (30) simply giving attention and credence to his words; for it is only by continuing in his word (31), and thus standing in a practical relation to him, that they can become true disciples, and this leads (32) to the knowledge of the truth, and through the knowledge of the truth to freedom.

31. *My disciples indeed*: better, "in truth my disciples."

33. The Jews who had "believed" him do not attain this practical relation; they continue in their carnal satisfaction in their boast that they are Abraham's children, and as such are free-born.

34. From Rom. vi. 16 sqq.

35. As slaves, you cannot remain in the father's house. But the son who is at home in the father's house can make you truly free, so that you may remain in the house.



38. *That which ye have seen with your father*, should be “that which ye have heard from your father.”

41. Jesus has dispelled their boast that they are the children of Abraham. They now fall back upon another assertion, that they have God for their father, and this not only in name, while they really have another father; they have one father, viz. God.

42. This boast also he dispels. They lie, as is manifest from the position which they take up in regard to him and his word (42, 43). Rather is the devil their father, as their deeds show. They are like him who was a murderer and a liar from the beginning.

43. *Because ye cannot hear*, should be “because ye are intolerant of.”

44. [*Ye will do*: i.e. “Ye desire to do.”]—*Abode not* should be “standeth not.”—*The father of it* should be “the father of the liar.”—*From the beginning*: i.e. from the beginning of the world and of human history.—*Of his own*: in contrast to him who speaks only what he hears from the Father, viz. the Son of God.

46. *Sin*: viz. sin against the truth, i.e. lies.

48. *A Samaritan*: one sunk in heresy and ignorance, who is unfit for pure Jewish fellowship.—*Hast a devil*: i.e. “art possessed.”

49. *I have not a devil*: i.e. “I am not possessed.”

52. It here becomes perfectly evident that when they accuse him of having a devil in him, they mean that he is insane. They regard it as a sign of insanity that he should give himself out to be greater than Abraham. Comp. x. 20.

54. *Honour . . . honour . . . honoureth*, should be “glorify . . . glory . . . glorifieth.”

56. *To see my day*: i.e. to see me in my incarnation. Abraham saw this day while he was still alive on earth, saw it, that is to say, in faith (comp. Rom. iv., Gal. iii. 6 sqq., Heb. xi.), when the promise of God was given to him that his family should be the bearer of the divine system of salvation in humanity (Gen. xvii.).

57. The Jews suppose that he speaks of an actual experience, and thereby asserts himself to have been a contemporary of Abraham.

58. See p. 197.

## CHAPTER ix.

## Verses 1—41.

Jesus, giving sight to a man born blind, shows himself as the light of the world.

1. This miracle has not only a chronological but also an essential connection with the speeches which precede (comp. viii. 12, ix. 5).

3. There is no reason to suppose that Jesus here intends to deny that such defects may ever be traced to the guilt of the individual who suffers from them, or of others (comp. v. 14). He only says that this particular case has a special purpose, the manifestation of God's action by means of the significant and marvellous cure (comp. xi. 4).

5. The claim to this title has no force in connection with the healing of the blind which he is about to perform, unless the latter is understood figuratively and reveals him as the light of the world.

6. These steps are not intended to make the healing natural or the miracle less. The miracle is still a simple act of omnipotence, but it is to be most vividly set before us. The type of the whole proceeding is found in Mark vii. 33—35.

7. We should read here and in ver. 11, "Go and wash thyself in Siloam." The interpretation of the name is added for the purpose of giving to the pool of Siloam a figurative reference to him who is truly sent from God, who must wash and cleanse us.

8. *Blind*: "a beggar." [So the best MSS. and editions.]

16. Notice, again, how the breaking of the Jewish Sabbath is again (as in v. 10—16) regarded as a valid argument against his having been sent by God, whereas it is really an argument in its favour.

18. The Jews are compelled inch by inch, in spite of all resistance, to acknowledge the miracle. Hence the long hearing of the case. But at the same time it is evident that they are resolved from the first not to acknowledge Christ nor to tolerate belief in him (vv. 16, 22, 34).

21. *He shall speak for himself* should be "He will himself give information about himself."

30. The blind man must teach them, even before he himself attains belief (vv. 36, 38), that an act of a kind so unheard of (32)



can only come from God, and can only be performed by one who does God's will, and therefore that there can be no doubt whence Jesus is (33).

38. He who has been made to see, attains also complete spiritual vision through belief in the "Lord."

39. This conclusion removes all doubt as to the symbolical meaning of the miracle. We have here the result: the action of the "Light of the world" in the world is represented by a physical miracle; it makes the blind to see, but at the same time those who see are blinded by their resistance to it.

41. Were you but blind without guilt! But in your pride you claim to see and therefore reject the true light. That is guilty blindness, which is not healed; it is sin and remains.

#### CHAPTER X.

Jesus as the one door that leads to salvation, and as the good divine shepherd.

#### Verses 1—10.

Jesus the one door of salvation. An application of Matt. vii. 13, 14; as he is the way, so he is also himself the door.

1. The fold must be understood to refer to the divine ordinances in Israel, as in the case of the vineyard with hedge and tower in Matt. xxi. 33. The entrance to salvation was through Christ even before he came into the world, inasmuch as he prepared salvation beforehand, and the Old Testament revelation is essentially his (i. 10).

2. He who desires to be a true shepherd to the souls that belong to God's pasture, must seek an entrance into the heart through him who is the mediator of every true revelation. He who follows not this way is the very opposite to a shepherd, he is a thief and a robber. Comp. ix. 22.

3. The sheep belong not to those who feed them, but to God, and to the shepherds appointed by him (ver. 12). There are, however, also sheep which are not his "own," i.e. which only bear his name. Comp. Ezek. xxxiv. 20—22.

5. This is evidently a warning against false teachers put into the mouth of Jesus. Hence the verbs are in the future tense.

8. *Before me*: without availing themselves of the door, and therefore by violence. Comp. Ezek. xxxiv. 2—10.

9. This verse does not refer to the shepherds especially, but is general in its application.

10. *More abundantly*: “abundantly.”

#### Verses 11—18.

The good shepherd. An allegory after Ezek. xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 24.

12. *The wolf*: comp. Ezek. xxxiv. 8.—A warning to the shepherds of the Christian communities, placed in the mouth of Jesus (comp. ver. 5).

16. A glance at those who are to come to the faith from among the Gentiles. They come not from a fold, as do those out of Israel, but they are “scattered sheep” (xi. 52). Jews and Gentiles appear here to be placed on a complete equality with regard to their admission.—*There shall be one fold*: “there shall be one flock.” [So all MSS. and editions. “Fold” here seems to have arisen simply from carelessness on the part of the English translators.]

18. *This commandment* should be “this commission,” and refers not only to ver. 18, but to the whole passage, 12—18.

#### Verses 19—21.

The result of this speech of Jesus.

#### Verses 22—42.

The divine dignity of the good shepherd.

22. We can scarcely doubt that the time of the feast of the consecration of the temple is purposely selected in connection with the substance of these speeches of Jesus. For now is Israel’s opportunity to celebrate the true consecration of the temple, when the Son of God has appeared in the flesh and walks in the sanctuary of his people.

24. [*Make us to doubt*: lit. “excite our souls,” i.e. probably, excite us by vague hopes and expectations.]

25. *Ye believed not*: “ye believe not.”

27—29. Here we see how the Evangelist, in spite of the change of time and place, has in his mind all the time the same train of thought which he has been following from the beginning of the chapter.

30. Not only is emphasis laid here upon the inner relation of the Son to the Father, but also the charge (ver. 33) is met, that



Jesus being a man makes himself God, i.e. places himself upon an equality with God.

35. In Ps. lxxxii. 6, the kings are called sons of God, or, what is the same thing, gods, because they reign in the name and by the authority of God.

36. The name is allowed to those to whom the (condemnatory) word of God applies. Will not you allow it to be used of him whom God has chosen as his own messenger to the world?—*Sanctified*: i.e. chosen, selected. Comp. vi. 69.

41, 42. Here the overpowering effect of Jesus' declaration of himself upon the unprejudiced is represented, in contrast to the deadly hostility which his testimony arouses in the zealots for the law.

## CHAPTER xi.

### Verses 1—44.

In raising Lazarus from the dead, Christ manifests himself as the resurrection and the life. In Mark v. 21—24, 35—43, we find the daughter of Jairus raised to life while she still lies on the death-bed. Luke (vii. 11—17) goes a step further and represents a dead man raised from the coffin. The fourth Evangelist, advancing still further, combines Luke x. 38—42 (whence we have the two sisters, Luke xvi. 27—31 (whence the name Lazarus), and 1 Cor. xv. 35 sqq. (of which a symbolic representation is here given). He thus gives us a new picture altogether: the raising from the dead of one who is already in the grave.

1. *Town*: "village."

2. This anointing by Mary is not mentioned as having already taken place, but as a well-known tradition. The account of it appears in xii. 3 sqq.

3. *His sisters* should be "the sisters."

8. *Of late sought* should be "have just sought."

9. *The day* is a symbol of the period appointed by God for human action.

11. *Sleepeth* should be "has fallen asleep." [So in ver. 12, *If he sleep* should be "if he has fallen asleep."]

12. *He shall do well*, i.e. "he will recover."

13. *Spake* should be "had spoken."

16. While others warn Jesus of danger (ver. 8, which reminds

us of Matt. xvi. 22), Thomas courageously exhorts them to die with Jesus.

18. *Furlongs: stadia.* Fifteen stadia, about a mile and three quarters.

22. *But I know that even now* should be "but even now I know." Martha can scarcely mean that she hopes that, in answer to Jesus' prayer, her brother may be restored to life. It is evident from ver. 24 that she has no such idea. She only declares that, in spite of the irrevocable event which has occurred, she has no doubt as to the miraculous powers which he obtains by prayer. Her feeling is the same as that of Mary (ver. 32).

23. *Shall rise again* should be "will rise again."

25. *The resurrection and the life:* both are personified in him. He will now manifest himself as the active source of both, and give a proof that he is so in raising Lazarus from the dead. This material resurrection from the dead is of course only a symbol of the spiritual.—*Though he were dead:* "though he die."

26. For those who believe in him who is life, there is no longer any such thing as death.

27. In answer to Jesus' question, Martha confesses that she believes in him as Christ, the Son of God. Not having completely grasped the meaning of what Jesus has said (ver. 23), she confesses as much as she has understood, and what she has indeed already believed before.

30. *Town:* "village."

33. *He groaned in the spirit* should be "he was vexed in the spirit." This vexation in the spirit signifies a deep, painful excitement, but it is not caused, as is often supposed, by the death of his friend, nor does it arise from overwhelming sympathy. It is an expression of the pain he feels at the blindness of those about him, who, in spite of all his previous manifestations, have not the slightest idea of what he intends to do, and on whom his saying in ver. 25, far from inflaming their hearts, has made no impression whatever.—*And was troubled* should be "and shook himself." His spirit rises in reaction against the pain he feels; he desires to recover himself and to maintain his self-possession.

35. Tears such as he shed over Jerusalem (Luke xix. 41). The Jews misunderstand them (ver. 36).



37. The surly unbelief of one section of the Jews who accompany the mourners, renews his painful excitement and the inner struggle (ver. 38).

38. [*Groaning*, the same as in ver. 33.]

39. The mention of four days is intended to enhance the miracle in the highest degree. In the mouth of Martha, it indicates her utter hopelessness.

#### Verses 45—57.

The result of this highest and most tangible manifestation of his living Messianic power is, that the chief-priests and Pharisees resolve to put him to death.

49. There seems here to be an erroneous idea that the office of high-priest changed annually. There is no doubt that at that time it changed often enough, not according to any definite order, however, but according to the arbitrary interference of the civil power.

51. The delivery of oracles appertained to the high-priest, at least in the early ages. Hence the belief that a prophetic speech was put into his mouth by God, during the exercise of his office, quite apart from any consciousness on his part of the fact that he was prophesying.

52. The believers among the Gentiles are called scattered children of God, a name usually applied to the Israelites among the Gentiles. We are here reminded of Eph. ii. 11—22.

54. *Ephraim* : a small city of Judea.

#### CHAPTER xii.

Verses 1—8 = Mark xiv. 3—9, combined with Luke vii. 37, 38.

Jesus, as the true lamb of God, is dedicated for the Feast of the Passover.

1. The day of the Passover being the 15th of Nisan, the sixth day before it (reckoning in Roman fashion) would be the 10th of the month. On this tenth day of the month the paschal lamb had to be selected, one without any defect, Exod. xii. 3—5. This is symbolically represented in the case of Jesus by his anointing.

6. *Bare* should be “carried off.”

#### Verses 9—11.

A continuation of xi. 45—57. In these verses we find a

description of the new movement which resulted from the events narrated in xi. 1—44.

### Verses 12—36.

Jesus, as the King of Israel foretold by the prophets, receives the homage of his people and of the Gentile world, and also the final divine sanction of the course that ends in his death.

12—16 = Mark xi. 1—10.

15. In the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, the Evangelist sees the fulfilment of a prophetic passage (Zech. ix. 9). Jesus thus actually declares himself as the true king of Sion or Israel, but in a spiritual sense, not as king of the Jews.

20. To the homage of his own people is now added that of the Greeks, i.e. of Gentiles. These representatives of the Gentile world modestly request that they may be allowed to see Jesus. He rejoices to hear of their wish, and sees in its expression the prelude to the glory which awaits him, and with which are combined such rich fruits for the kingdom of light, including even the Gentiles. Fruits, however, which could only be purchased by his death.

25, 26. He adds a warning and a promise to those that believe.

27—30. These verses take the place in the fourth Gospel of Mark xiv. 32—42 (Gethsemane). So bitter and God-forsaken a struggle with death as we find in Mark, would be unworthy of the incarnate Son of God, especially after the triumphant prayer of ch. xvii.

27. *Troubled*: lit. "shaken."—*For this cause*: i.e. in order that he might receive divine help in the sight of all the world.

31. *Now is the judgment* should be "now there is a judgment." Satan's rule over this world is broken down.

32. This is the Johannine substitute for the return of Christ, which receded more and more into the background the longer it was delayed.

34. The people bring forward a Jewish theological objection, possibly one that was actually raised in the time of the Evangelist. Jesus' reply is, that they must make use of the light during the short period that remains to them, to become the children of light.

35, 36. [*While* should be "as," i.e. according as. *Meyer.*]



36. *And did hide himself*: i.e. he vanished, became invisible to them, a symbol of that which was about to happen.

#### Verses 37—50.

The Evangelist here sums up the results of Jesus' labours and his testimony to the world concerning himself.

38. The sad course of events, the want of appreciation on the part of the people, the Evangelist finds foretold by Isaiah (liii. 1). He derives consolation, however, from the fact, that in the same prophet (vv. 39—41 = Is. vi. 9, 10) he finds a divine judgment of blindness and hardness of heart is foretold with direct reference to Jesus.

42. The sad state of things is to some extent limited.

44—50. As we call i. 1—18 the prologue, so we may call this conclusion an epilogue composed in words taken from Jesus himself. The Evangelist here sums up what Jesus is to the world.

48. *In the last day*: This ought probably to be omitted. His word exercises its judicial power at once. We find the same interpolation in vi. 39, 40, 44, 54.

#### CHAPTER xiii.

Jesus' last meal with his disciples. A complete reconstruction of Mark xiv. 22—25.

#### Verses 1—20.

The symbolic washing of the feet of the disciples. Comp. notes on Luke xii. 37, xxii. 27.

1. *Before the feast*: hence this last supper is not the Jewish Passover. See pp. 198 sq.—*He loved them*: This supper is to be a pledge of his love to them, the washing of their feet testifying to it at the same time. The latter represents a two-fold love: first, the love which he who is leaving his disciples bears to them, and secondly, the love which they owe to one another. This mutual love is a reflection of his love for them.

2. *And supper being ended* should be "And during a meal that had been prepared."

3. *Went* should be "was going."

6. *Dost thou wash my feet*: with special emphasis on the word "thou."

7. This verse points out that there is a symbolic meaning in

the washing. What this meaning is appears in ver. 8, viz. that Jesus must wash him who is to "have part with him." But he who already has part with him is made clean altogether (xv. 3), and only a partial cleansing constantly repeated is still required (ver. 10). Jesus thus cleanses his disciples, as the feet, which are perpetually brought into contact with the dust of the earth, require perpetually to be washed anew. Where, then, does Jesus thus wash his disciples? At the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is here presented in a new aspect as a purifying love-feast. The love of his disciples for one another must be a purifying love (ver. 14).

20. The supper is a seal upon the brotherly covenant which rejects no one who bears the mark which shows that Jesus has sent him (comp. vi. 37). The Evangelist is well acquainted with the Synoptic account of the last supper (comp. the discovery of the traitor). He desires, however, to do away entirely with every connection between the Christian meal and the Jewish Passover. Hence the appointment of the supper as given by the first three Evangelists is here omitted. In its place we find the washing of feet as a symbolic representation of the Christian love-feast. The symbol of the eating and drinking of his flesh and blood has already been elucidated (vi. 53—58), but not in such a way as to limit it to the supper.

#### Verses 21—30.

Jesus dismisses the traitor to perform his work of darkness. Reconstruction of Mark xiv. 17—21.

21. *Troubled*: lit. "stirred" or "violently moved." The pain which agitates him is caused by the loss of one of his disciples (comp. vi. 70), who thus falls away and assumes a satanic nature, not by the prospect of the death with which he himself is threatened.

23. *Leaning on Jesus' bosom*: lit. "lying in Jesus' lap" (comp. i. 18). Hence this disciple stands in the same intimate relation to the Son in which the Son stands to the Father. The relation to this disciple, again, is itself typical (comp. xvii. 24).

24. Peter appears as less intimate with Jesus, and himself acknowledges this in seeking the mediation of John. The great apostolic name to which Jewish Christianity appealed is all



along thrown into the background behind the ideal disciple of love.

26. Who the traitor is, is made known during the meal only to the disciple in Jesus' bosom, and perhaps by him to Peter.

27. Jesus himself drives the traitor not only to his decision, but also to the speedy despatch of his deed. The Evangelist wishes to make it perfectly clear that he into whose hands the Father has delivered all things, is neither caught in the toils before he is aware of it, nor falls an unwilling sacrifice to treachery and deceit. He represents Jesus as showing indisputably (ver. 19) how he sees through everything, and gives himself up into the hands of his faithless disciple, because his hour is come when he departs from the world and goes to the Father (ver. 1). This representation is of course entirely unhistorical.

30. The night (ix. 4) is come.

#### Verses 31—35.

Transition to Jesus' farewell address to his disciples.

31. The hour of glorification is now come, but it is also the hour of separation (33). What he has to say to them may all be comprehended in the fundamental commandment of love.

32. *In himself*: comp. xvii. 5.

34. *A new commandment*: new inasmuch as such love as he has manifested is new and unheard of.

35. This verse is no doubt written from the Evangelist's own experience. The world was astonished at the brotherly love of the Christians. This love he desires to see maintained as the true sign of a Christian.

#### Verses 36—38.

Reconstruction of Mark xiv. 29—31.

36. *Thou shalt follow me afterwards*: an indication of Peter's violent death (comp. xxi. 18).

#### CHAPTERS xiv.—xvii.

These four chapters form one section containing the words of comfort and last teachings of Jesus addressed by him to his disciples before he leaves them.

#### CHAPTER xiv.

Ere he leaves them, Jesus promises his disciples that he will prepare a heavenly dwelling for them, and that, while they

remain in the world, they shall have, instead of him, a plentiful fulfilment of their prayers and the holy spirit as their helper.

1. *Troubled*: lit. "shaken, moved."—*Ye believe in God, believe also in me*, should be "believe in God and believe in me."

2. *Mansions*: "dwellings."

3. *And if I go and prepare a place for you*, should be "And when I am gone and have prepared a place for you." His "return" includes not only his own appearance after the resurrection, but also the imparting of the spirit connected therewith (vv. 20—22); for this also was a coming of Jesus, and indeed was more than his first coming. He comes from his Father's house, i.e. from heaven, the upper world.

6. The conclusion of this verse shows why Jesus calls himself the way. He can lead men to the Father, because he is the bearer of perfect truth. By means of truth he imparts the life which he bears in himself in fullest measure.

7. *From henceforth*: inasmuch as he has told them (ver. 6) who he is.

9. As Philip does not yet understand, he explains that he is what he is only by virtue of the closest spiritual union between himself and the Father.

10. *He doeth the works* should be "doeth the works himself."

12. *Greater works*: inasmuch as they will correspond to the greater exaltation of Jesus, without whose mediation they are not done. It is not miraculous signs that are here intended, but the results of the gospel itself, which had remained so small, until the corn of wheat (xii. 24) had fallen into the earth.

13, 14. *In my name*: this includes, first, an appeal to his intercession (mediation); secondly, prayer in the closest spiritual communion with him (ver. 20); and thirdly, prayer in accordance with his teaching and in his spirit (ver. 21).

16. *Comforter* should be "helper." That the "helper" is regarded as a person (though not material), and not simply as a spiritual power, is historically very probable.

18. *Comfortless*: "orphans." The coming of the spirit is in a higher sense the coming of the glorified Christ himself.

23. He cannot reveal himself to the world, because the world loves him not and is therefore closed against him.

25. *Being yet present with you*: [lit. "remaining with you"] i.e. "because I still tarry with you."



26. *Comforter* should be “helper.”

27. *Peace*: i.e. a sure and blessed peace of mind.—*Troubled*: strictly, “moved” or “shaken.”

28. *Come again* should be simply “come.”—*Ye would rejoice because I said I go unto the Father*, should be “Ye would rejoice that I go unto the Father.” The Father who is greater than Christ will reveal himself still further in him after he is exalted.

30. *Hath nothing in me*: i.e. “he has no power over me.” He cannot affect me in any way; and if I allow his violence, I do it only in obedience to the Father’s will.

31. “But, that the world may know that I love the Father, and that I do as the Father hath commanded me, arise, let us go hence.”—*Arise*: after Mark xiv. 42. In Mark, however, this word is uttered in Gethsemane; here it is spoken during the meal. According to this, the company rise now from table, but before they really depart, Jesus utters, standing, the contents of ch. xv.—xvii.

#### CHAPTER XV.

Jesus ere his departure testifies to the intimate spiritual communion in which he will still be united with those who remain behind.

#### Verses 1—11.

He will stand in the same relation to them in which the main stem of the vine stands to the fruit-bearing branches.

1. An Old Testament figure. Comp. Ps. lxxx. 8—15; Ezek. xv. 1—6, xix. 10—14.

2. It should be observed that the action of the Father in the care of the redeemed is not supplanted either by the action of the Son after he is exalted, nor by the action of the “helper” who takes his place upon earth. The most important decision is still retained by the Father.

11. *Joy*: the blessed state of mind that is determined by the inalienable spiritual possession.

#### Verses 12—17.

He raises them from the position of servants to that of intimate friends.

15, 16. We have here a picture taken from the court of one of the Cæsars, selecting on his accession, in addition to his ser-

vants, a more intimate circle of friends (*amici*) whom he initiates into his plans. Complete equality is excluded by ver. 16.

15. *I call you not* should be "I no longer call you."

16. *Ordained*: "appointed."

#### Verses 18—27.

While they share his rejection by the world, they may also share the power of the testimony of the spirit of truth.

18. *Ye know*: "know." [The Greek may mean either.]

21. *For my name's sake*: because ye acknowledge me.

22. *No cloke*: "no excuse."

25. *Law*: in the wider sense = the writings of the law; Ps. xxxv. 19.

26. *Comforter* should be "helper."

27. *And ye also shall bear witness*: to be understood as a commission. Comp. ver. 17.

#### CHAPTER xvi.

#### Verses 1—15.

The operation of the "helper" (who cannot come until Jesus has gone to his home) in regard to the hostile world and in the inner life of his disciples.

2. It is here evident that at the date of the composition of the Fourth Gospel, the Christian religious community had completely separated from the Jewish, and that the two stood in violent antagonism to each other.—*Time* should be "hour."

4. *Time* should be "hour."

5. Comp. xiii. 36, xiv. 5. From the words of Jesus in ver. 7, it appears that it is not simply because they do not ask him *whither* he goes that he is surprised, but because they do not ask of what significance his departure might be to them.

7. *Comforter* should be "helper."

8. *Reprove* should be "convince."

9. The sin of the world is pre-eminently unbelief. The spirit will set the fact that this unwillingness to believe is sin so plainly before the world, that it will be convinced.

10. The fact that he is no more seen is manifest proof that he is gone to the Father. The fact that he goes to the Father is a proof of the righteousness of the Son of God who is rejected by the world, and thus is the seal upon his words and his work.



11. That judgment has fallen upon the prince of this world, the devil, and that he has consequently been deprived of his power (xii. 31), will be victoriously proved to the world by the spirit. All this will be forced upon the view of the world (by those who acknowledge him) as a revelation of the spirit, that some may be converted and some become ripe for judgment.

13, 14. This seems to be directed against the Montanist movement in Asia Minor (p. 198). The Montanist theory regarded the spirit as capable of leading men beyond Jesus and his revelation, whereas the Fourth Gospel says the spirit will guide them, not beyond Christ, but only deeper and deeper into his nature.—*Into all truth* should be “into the whole truth.”

### Verses 16—33.

Jesus brings his disciples to the final understanding of his departure to the Father and belief in it.

16. *Because I go to the Father* should be omitted.

17. The interest that is wanting in ver. 5 is here awakened in the minds of the disciples. They ask him what his going away means. Jesus answers that it shall quickly lead them to joy.

25. *Proverbs* should be “parables,” i.e. obscure language which it is not very easy at once entirely to understand. The full meaning will be brought to them by the spirit, being made evident to them indeed by the departure of Jesus to the Father.

29. *Proverb* should be “parable.”—This declaration of the disciples is not to be regarded as a proof of their ignorance or want of real understanding, but Jesus has actually declared plainly (and not for the first time) whence he came and whither he was going, and they have understood it in faith (xvii. 7, 8), but only to become weak in faith immediately afterwards and leave him alone (ver. 32).

### CHAPTER xvii.

This chapter contains the prayer of Jesus which is sometimes called the high-priestly prayer. In this form of a dialogue with the Father he concludes his address to his disciples. Jesus represents himself as ready to enter into his glory after he has completed the divinely-appointed work, and at the same time as one who has preserved those who are his and brought them all to perfection.

## Verses 1—5.

Jesus prays that he may be glorified, i.e. that he may be received into the glory that was prepared for him before the world was.

2. *Eternal life*: In the Fourth Gospel this is very far from signifying simply a continuance of life beyond the grave when all things are completed. It is the true spiritual life which is merged in the knowledge of the true God and of him whom He has sent (ver. 3; comp. v. 24). The spiritual fulness of life, which thus enters into men, is indeed of such a nature that no death can in any way affect it. It may rather be said to abolish death, xi. 25, 26.—*As many as* should be “everything that.”

5. The question arises whether the glory which Jesus desires to enter is a new and higher glory which has been appointed for him (as in Phil. ii. 9; Heb. ii. 7—9), or a glory which he has already possessed since the world began. The expression, *which I had with thee*, makes the latter supposition the more probable; but indeed the whole theory of the incarnation scarcely leaves any choice in the matter; for one who was God and was in the bosom of the Father can but return to the glory which he has left, and cannot enter into any new or higher glory.

## Verses 6—16.

Jesus prays for those whom the Father has already given to him, that he may preserve them and sanctify them.

9. *I pray not for the world*: The world is that part of humanity which has shown itself and will show itself incapable of receiving the divine salvation, in opposition to those whom God has *given* to the Son, and who are *not of the world* (ver. 16), i.e. do not belong to it. It is not intended, however, that this distinction should be understood in the sense of strict predestination. If the Evangelist has a tendency to such a doctrine (xii. 39—41, xiii. 18), still he admits the possibility of belief for all men, and does not relieve them of the responsibility of unbelief (ix. 41, xv. 24).

11. *Keep through thine own name those whom, &c., should be* “Keep them in thy name which thou hast given to me,” &c.

## Verses 12—14.

Jesus now delivers up his own unto the Father, inasmuch as he no longer has them under his own immediate care as before.



Hitherto he has preserved them himself, and himself given to them the Father's word.

17. *Through thy truth* should be "in the truth."

19. *Sanctify*: devote to God, consecrate, i.e. in death. His dedication must work in his disciples so that they also may be dedicated as sharing in the truth. [*Through the truth* should be "in truth."]

#### Verses 20—26.

Jesus prays that all who believe in him may be made perfect in one union with him and the Father, sharing in his glory.

21. So that the (sanctifying) belief in my mission may be extended over the whole earth. This does not mean, however, that every individual man is to attain to belief.

22. The glory which he has given to them is the fulness of grace and truth, by which he manifested himself as the only-begotten of the Father (comp. i. 14, 18).

23. *Made perfect in one* should be "completed into one."

25. *Righteous*: The Father is here called "righteous," or "just," inasmuch as His attitude towards the world, which does not acknowledge the Son on the one hand, and towards those who receive the divine message on the other hand, is but the necessary result of the acceptance or rejection of His love as manifested in Jesus.—*The world hath not known thee*, &c., should be, "As the world hath not known thee (but I have known thee), so these have known," &c.

26. The loving relation of the Father to the Son is to extend to all who belong to the Son, and find its perfect image in the relation of the Son to his own.

#### CHAPTER xviii.

In this and the following chapter we see Jesus himself yielding up his life (comp. x. 18).

#### Verses 1—12.

He surrenders himself to his enemies. The very reverse of Mark xiv. 43—52.

1. The valley of Cedron, between the city and the Mount of Olives.

3. *A band of men*: strictly "the cohort;" this Roman cohort in connection with the capture of Christ only appears in the Fourth Gospel.

4. *All things that should come upon him* should be "all that was coming upon him."

5. There is no place in the Fourth Gospel for the kiss of Judas. Indeed, the Evangelist appears to omit it purposely, in order to make it more plain that Jesus delivers himself into the hands of his enemies.

6. We must not explain this away by saying that those in front drew back, and perhaps fell in the darkness and confusion. The Evangelist means that those who had been commanded to seize him, overcome by his more than human exaltation, fell to the ground in amazement (comp. vii. 45, 46). They have no power over him. It is rather he who has power over them (xiii. 3); but he delivers himself up into their hands (ver. 8), while at the same time by the power of his word he protects his own from violence (vv. 8, 9).

11. In Matt. xxvi. 52, the reason assigned for abstaining from armed resistance is not quite the same. The point there maintained is, that the employment of violence is a wrong which God avenges.

12. See ver. 3.

#### Verses 13—27.

Peter's denial, during the trial before the high-priests. A reconstruction of Mark xiv. 53—72.

13. There should be a full-stop at the end of ver. 12, and then ver. 13 should begin, "And they led him," &c.

15. *Another* should be "the other." [Most of the old MSS. read "another," but there are one or two which have "the other."] "The other disciple" is the same whom the Evangelist has already pointed out (xiii. 24) as most intimate with Jesus, and whom in the account of the last supper he has placed before Peter. Here and in the following chapter this is still more striking. It is not likely that the son of a fisherman of Galilee was a personal friend, or, as might perhaps be meant here, even a relative of the high-priest. It is rendered less improbable, however, by the fact that we have here another form of the Jewish-Christian tradition according to which John (and also his brother James) wore the gold plate on his forehead, which was the sign of high-priestly rank.

16. Peter denies the Lord, although he enjoys the protection



of the friend or even relative of the high-priest. The other disciple, on the contrary, so far from denying his discipleship, acknowledges it in the well-known house by boldly and openly "going in with Jesus" (ver. 15).

20. *Whither the Jews always resort*: "where all the Jews come together."—The words in which Jesus here defends himself are found in the main in the Synoptic Gospels, but are there given in connection with his capture (Mark xiv. 48, 49).

24. *Now Annas had sent him*: "And Annas sent him." This bringing of Jesus before Annas, who is spoken of in ver. 19 as a high-priest, is to be explained by the statement in Luke that Jesus was first taken "into the house of the high-priest," and then, when it was day, brought before the Sanhedrim (Luke xxii. 54, 56). Annas and Caiaphas are also spoken of there as being high-priests at the same time (Luke iii. 2; Acts iv. 6). Hence it might naturally appear to the fourth Evangelist suitable to represent the high-priest "of that same year" in the great council as preparing for the others. In reality, however, Annas had nothing now of the high-priestly office except the name, and between him and Caiaphas were no less than three high-priests who had been similarly deposed. Nothing is said here about the judicial proceedings and sentence. According to the Fourth Gospel, the Jews had long ago resolved upon the death of Jesus, and so all the stress is now laid upon the proceedings before Pilate.

26. [*His kinsman, &c.*: i.e. "kinsman of him whose ear," &c.].

#### Verses 28—xix. 16.

After long resistance, permission for the execution is at last extorted from Pilate. Reconstruction of Mark xv. 1—20.

28. *Lest they should be, &c.*: "that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover."

33—37. In the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus answers with a simple Yes. In the Fourth Gospel, the imputation of his wishing to be king of the Jews is assigned to the Jews (vv. 34, 35). Jesus declares himself to be a very different king, one whose kingdom is not of this world. He is the royal witness to the truth. Evidently the fourth Evangelist is here anxious to correct the Synoptic description, and rectify it in such a way as to make it harmonize with his representation of Christ.

38. We cannot but conclude from the whole bearing of Pilate, as represented in the Fourth Gospel, that his question is to be understood, not as a contemptuous expression of unbelief, but as a powerless inquiry and search for truth on the part of the representative of the heathen world.

39. *Will ye therefore that I release unto you?* should be, "If ye will, therefore, I will release unto you."—Pilate desires to avail himself of the choice of the people between two persons condemned to death for the release of Jesus. The treatment of Jesus described in xix. 1—3 is intended to serve the same purpose. (Comp. note on Luke xxiii. 16.)

#### CHAPTER xix.

1. *Scourged him* should be "caused him to be scourged."

5. *Behold the man*: an object rather for pity than for punishment, and certainly no king in the sense of the charge brought against him.

7. *A law*: Lev. xxiv. 16, comp. Matt. xxvi. 63 sqq.—*By our law*: "by the law."

8, 9. Pilate appears here as one who is not far from believing in the Son of God.

11. *Thou couldst have*: "Thou wouldest have."—The chief guilt is here said to lie upon the Jews. This is consistent with the whole description of the proceedings before Pilate, which is determined throughout by the writer's endeavour to oppose to the demands of the Jews the greatest possible resistance on the part of the Roman governor, and thus to bring out to its full extent the guilt of the Jews.

12. *From henceforth* should be "in consequence of this."

14. About twelve o'clock. He hangs upon the cross till evening. This is exactly the time when the law directs that the paschal lamb shall be slain. Thus it is also with the true paschal lamb. The proceedings before Pilate occupy, therefore, the whole morning. All this time and labour is required to overcome the resistance on the part of the Gentile who recognizes the innocence and surmises the divine origin of Jesus.

#### Verses 17—30.

Jesus is raised to the cross (comp. iii. 14). Reconstruction of Mark xv. 20—37.



17. He bears his cross himself. In the Synoptics, it is borne for him by Simon of Cyrene.

22. Jesus having rejected the title of King of the Jews, and Pilate by his exhibition of him to the people (vv. 4, 5) having shown that he considers this charge unfounded, the superscription on the cross must be understood as turning the title into a charge against the Jews. They wished him to be condemned as a pretender to a Jewish throne (ver. 15), their real reason, of course, being that they were unwilling to acknowledge him as the Son of God (ver. 7).

23, 24. *Coat* should be "tunic," an under, not upper, garment. This development of the description of the division of the raiment, which we find in the Fourth Gospel, rests upon an ultra-literal interpretation of Ps. xxii. 18. Comp. a similar case in Matt. xxi. 2, 7.

25. We cannot ascertain with certainty from these words, or from any other source, whether the sister of Jesus' mother is Mary the wife of Cleopas or a person distinct from her.

26. The disciple whom Jesus loves is his spiritual brother, i.e. his true brother (comp. vii. 5). Hence he entrusts to him his mother, perhaps in order thus symbolically to mark him out as the one whom at his departure Jesus himself appoints as guardian of the community which has been gathered together out of Israel.

28. *I thirst*: This is spoken of as a fulfilment of the scripture, inasmuch as the Evangelist finds an allusion to the giving of vinegar to the crucified to drink (ver. 30) in Psalm lxix. 21. No doubt he considers this significant as the prophetic expression of the bitterest sufferings imposed upon him by the wickedness of his brothers (Ps. lxix. 8). Thus the words *I thirst* are suitably placed as his last saying before the words "It is finished" (ver. 30), which of course are to be understood of the completion of the divine counsel.

29. A rod of hyssop would not be suitable for such a purpose. On the other hand, it is appropriate to the paschal lamb (Ex. xii. 22).

30. He has drunk the bitter cup (xviii. 11).—*Gave up the ghost* should be "yielded up his spirit." The expression is undoubtedly chosen with reference to Luke xxiii. 46.

## Verses 31—42.

Three divine signs on the corpse of Jesus, viz. that his legs are not broken, that blood and water flow from his side when it is pierced, and that he is buried as a rich man. Transformation and reconstruction of Mark xv. 38—47.

31. The Jews are desirous of knowing that the legs of Jesus have been broken, in order to preserve their paschal feast from being defiled. But the bones of the paschal lamb must not be broken (Exod. xii. 46). Hence Jesus is indicated by God himself as the true paschal lamb by the fact that his legs are not broken. In place of this, therefore, Jesus is pierced in the side after he is dead, and this proves a fulfilment of a passage of scripture (ver. 37, comp. Zech. xii. 10).

34. The Evangelist certainly does not mean that the death of Jesus is proved by the flowing of blood and water from his side. This is rather symbolical of the way in which the fountain of the true means of purification is opened to mankind in the death of Jesus. The two substances refer without doubt to the mysteries of the Christian religion, the blood to the Lord's Supper, and the water to baptism.

35. There is some reason for believing that the fourth Evangelist found previous traditions both of the legs of Jesus not having been broken, and of his having been pierced by a lance, and that he did not invent either statement—though both traditions have the appearance of being very recent. On the other hand, the flowing forth of blood and water, with its deep symbolic meaning, may very probably have been the Evangelist's own idea, and it is just for this spiritual perception of the flowing of the fountains of life from Jesus' corpse that he adduces Jesus' most intimate disciple as his authority. It should be noticed that the Evangelist by no means appeals to this disciple for all his statements, but only for this single trait, the appreciation of which assumes a spiritual insight.

39. The rulers and greatest men of the hostile Jewish people must rescue the honour of Jesus now that all is perfected, must show him such reverence as shall manifest his righteousness (xvi. 10), and condemn their own nation immediately upon the completion of the crime. We can get no other meaning from this participation of the "ruler of the Jews" (iii. 1). Even by



the standard of the law, Jesus is righteous (comp. vii. 51), and an honourable Jewish burial, such as is his right, must be given him by Jews. Probably the Evangelist also read Is. liii. 9, "They shall give him a tomb with the rich because he hath committed no crime, and no deceit was in his mouth," and then understood the passage to refer to the Son of God who had returned home to the Father.

#### CHAPTER XX.

##### Verses 1—29.

Jesus manifests himself after his death as the living Lord and God. Reconstruction of Luke xxiv. 1, 2, 9—12. Comp. note on 1 Cor. xv. 4—8.

##### Verses 1—10.

The empty grave leads the two disciples, who stand pre-eminent above the others, to the belief that he still lives.

2. These two appear in the Fourth Gospel as the leaders of the company of disciples, and John as the first of the two. In the Synoptics, on the other hand, James appears with John, and Peter stands first.

4. The yearning of the closest and deepest love urges the disciple "whom Jesus loved" more quickly to the grave than Peter. He outstrips him.

5. After he has seen the clothes lying empty he remains astonished and lost in thought before the grave.

6. Peter, when he comes up, perceives the napkin laid on one side, carefully rolled up, the sign that the dead still lives.

8. Now the other disciple follows, and the sight induces him "to believe" (i.e. to believe that Jesus lives). He is therefore the first of the disciples to believe. It is not expressly said of Peter that he believed; no doubt the fourth Evangelist wishes to make him follow John in this "belief," without expressly saying so. This is accounted for by the account in Luke (xxiv. 12), on which the present narrative is based. There Peter (alone), after looking into the grave, goes home "wondering" (i.e. not having attained to belief). [In Luke xxiv. 12, some translators render "departed to his home wondering," instead of "departed wondering in himself."]—These two disciples here require no appearance of the Lord; the empty grave brings them

to belief, though in such a way that as yet they know not the scripture (ver. 9), which appears from ii. 22, xii. 16, to be an essential part of a complete belief.

Verses 11—18.

Jesus sends word to his brethren of his ascent to the Father. Reconstruction of Luke xxiv. 3—8.

11. This happens immediately, early on the first day of the week, Sunday. Mary must be supposed to have returned to the grave without delay. She sees angels, which she appears not to recognize as such; she is spoken to by Jesus himself, whom in her grief she similarly fails to recognize. But when he speaks, when she hears the loving voice of the true shepherd (x. 4, 14), she recognizes him at once.

17. In her joy at seeing him again, she seeks to embrace his knees. He refuses to allow this; for he is on the way to the Father, and this ascent to his God and Father, and the God and Father of his brethren, is the last step in the completion of his revelation, and is as necessary to his disciples (xvi. 7) as to himself. Until this has taken place he cannot be for them the glorified one. This, then, is no time to touch him; it is the time to announce to those who are his that the great moment of his return to his home has arrived. Hence the fourth Evangelist represents Jesus as ascending to God at once, on the very day on which the grave is found empty—an invisible ascension, by the side of which a later and visible ascension has no place. Mary's desire to touch him is accordingly only a subordinate trait in the account, and it is not the intention of the Evangelist to represent Mary as weak in faith.

Verses 19—23.

Jesus after his return to the Father fulfils his promise and breathes his spirit into those whom he sends forth. Reconstruction of Luke xxiv. 33—40; Acts ii. 1—4.

20. There is no indication that the disciples were unwilling to believe him without his showing his hands and his side. He shows them voluntarily, in order that no doubt may arise as to its being he. We must not conclude from this that the fourth Evangelist conceives of the body of the departed Jesus as material, but Jesus gives signs which cannot deceive. According to our Evangelist, the flesh profiteth nothing (vi. 63). He is as



far, therefore, as Paul from regarding the body of Jesus, as he now appears, as a fleshly body. For him the resurrection by no means consists in a restoration of the body to life, but in the continuance of life, and the manifestation of himself as still living in spite of death.—It is remarkable that the pierced feet are not mentioned here, as they are in the Synoptic Gospels.

21. *Peace be unto you*: They shall now receive it, as he had promised (comp. xiv. 27). He gives them his peace as he himself has obtained it. He also commissions them to be his witnesses (xv. 27); and they further receive the spirit, the “helper” (xv. 26, vii. 39).—*Receive ye the Holy Ghost* should be “Receive holy spirit.”

23. Reconstruction of Matt. xviii. 18.

#### Verses 24—29.

The heavenly Christ gives material proof to weak faith, and brings the disciple, who is so hard to convince, to the acknowledgment of his divinity.

28. This confession embraces everything that the Fourth Gospel is intended to set forth in all its representations of Christ. Comp. p. 195.

29. As the miracles are only symbolical representations of the spiritual life, and yet are conceived of as historical, so the appearances of the risen one which are physically perceived are indications of his true heavenly existence. They are concessions to the weakness of the physical nature of man, which the believer does best not to use, and must at any rate learn to do without.

30, 31. Conclusion of the Gospel. It should be noticed that the whole representation of the life of Jesus is given as it is seen from what we may call the miraculous point of view. In the miracles he reveals his divine nature and power. His word is for the most part only the explanation of his symbolical acts.

31. *Through his name*: “in his name.”

#### CHAPTER xxi.

#### Verses 1—23.

A supplement to the Fourth Gospel, from another hand, written in the interests of Peter. The intention of this passage, viz. to bring Peter, the prince of the apostles, forward from his position after the beloved disciple, is self-evident. This is itself proof

sufficient that the chapter does not belong to the Gospel, and that it cannot be from the hand of the Evangelist.

Verses 1—8.

The plentiful draught of fishes under the leadership of Peter. Reconstruction of Luke v. 1—11.

3. *Into a ship*: "into the ship."

5. *Have ye any meat?* should be, "Have ye anything to eat with your bread?" [The word rendered "meat" signifies, strictly, something eaten with other food, especially meat or fish eaten with the bread or vegetables that formed the chief part of the meal.] Here fish is meant, which was very commonly eaten with bread. Jesus puts his question as if he desired something to eat.

6. Peter appears here as the apostle who is called to cast his net out into the great Gentile world, and meets with the richest results. So also in Luke v. 6, where we have likewise a symbolic narrative.

7. Here also we have a contest between the two which shall bear away the palm. While the intimate and pensive disciple recognizes the Lord, Peter, active and vigorous, casts himself into the sea, unable to wait in his eagerness to come to Jesus. He is here compensated for the representation of his being left behind in the race to the grave (xx. 4).

Verses 9—14.

The Lord has a plentiful meal ready for his fishermen to refresh them after their work is finished. Reconstruction of Luke xxiv. 41—43.

11. The most important part of the work, the actual drawing out of the net upon the land, is performed by Peter (comp. ver. 8). The full name, Simon Peter, in all its solemnity, is no doubt used intentionally (vv. 2, 3, 7, 11, 15). It is due to the skill of his hand that the net, in spite of the multitude of fishes, is not broken (comp. note on Luke v. 6); and so his name represents the unity of the church. The great fishes are probably intended to represent the congregations, so that Peter is represented as properly the founder and leader of the congregations and the supporter of the unity of the Church.

14. We must not conclude from this number that the Evangelist himself added this supplementary passage, for in chapter



xx. we have, as we have already pointed out, a graduated set of three manifestations of the glorified Jesus.

### Verses 15—23.

To Simon Peter the supervision of the flock is assigned by him who is strictly the shepherd. The other disciple is only specially directed to "tarry."

15. The question here should probably be taken as a humiliation of Peter for his denial of Christ; the answer, as a sufficient propitiation. The first place among the apostles in the conduct of the flock is plainly given to him, a tradition which we find as early as the Synoptics. (Comp. Matt. xvi. 18, 19.)

18. The promise that he shall be glorified by a violent death is further given to him. By it he is to be made a perfect follower of Jesus (ver. 19). Perhaps the stretching forth of the hands indicates a death by crucifixion. The stress laid upon the martyr's death, and indeed the whole exaltation of Peter, suggest Rome as the place where this appendix to the Gospel was written. Perhaps it was intended to make the Fourth Gospel, with its Asiatic preference for John, more acceptable to the Romans.

23. At the time when this appendix was composed, John appeared in tradition as the apostle who was to survive all the others. It had been expected that, in fulfilment of Mark ix. 1, he would not die, but live to see the second coming of the Lord. Yet he had died and the Lord had not come. How could this be explained? The writer of the appendix explains it thus: Jesus never said that John should not die, but only that he should tarry, i.e. remain longer than Peter and the other apostles. A misunderstanding of his words gave rise to a belief which experience proved to be false; for Jesus had only said that it was nothing to Peter if he would that this disciple should tarry till he came. Thus the disciple whom Jesus loved retains a position of importance by the side of Peter, but at the same time the latter is distinctly placed before him by the commission to feed the flock of Jesus.

### Verses 24, 25.

Conclusion of the appendix. The writer not only refers directly to the beloved disciple as the authority for this appendix (which the fourth Evangelist only does in the case of a single mysterious occurrence), but he even declares that the appendix

(and probably he includes with it the whole Gospel) was actually written by that disciple. There is no reason whatever for supposing that these verses are from the hand of a third party who wished to bear testimony to the authenticity of the Gospel. This supposition is excluded by verse 23, which could not be the conclusion, and verse 25, with which only a writer, and not a witness to the book, could conclude. To bear witness concerning the events of the life of Jesus, as no other can, appears to the writer of the appendix to be the special office of this apostle who survives the others. In this he agrees with the writer of the Gospel.



## THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

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THE Book of Acts, according to ecclesiastical tradition and its own assertion (i. 1), is the work of the author of the third Gospel. This view is also supported by the style of the writer and the view which he takes of his subject. The gospel narrative, the first part of which is contained in the third Gospel, is continued from the account of the resurrection of Jesus (A.D. 35) to Paul's entrance into Rome and his two years' residence there, i.e. down to the year A.D. 64. For this reason, the collectors of the New Testament writings placed it between the Gospels and Paul's Epistles, for which it affords an historical setting, and gave it the name of "The Acts of the Apostles."

The writer begins by indicating generally, in the parting words of Jesus to his disciples (i. 8), the subject of his work, which is a description of the spread of the gospel from Jerusalem and Judea through Samaria to the ends of the earth. In accordance with this, the first part of the Book of Acts (i. 1—ix. 30) gives an account of the establishment of the Christian Church in Palestine; and the second part, which is considerably more comprehensive (ix. 31—xxviii. 31), gives an account of its extension in the heathen world, first its spread in Asia, then its passage to Europe, and finally the way by which the gospel reached the imperial city of Rome. The description of the founding of the Church, which is contained in the first part, is essentially connected with the person of the Apostle Peter, while the spread of the gospel among the Gentiles is almost throughout connected with the Apostle Paul. At the same time, the account of the

conversion of Paul is found in the first part, and the second part opens with the consecration of the mission to the Gentiles by Peter.

The writer, however, by no means limits himself to an historical account of the progress of the gospel during the period which we have indicated. He pursues in his history a purpose which is easily recognized. He supplies us with historical information only so far as it serves this purpose, and he gives it in a form which is adapted to it. For the same reason he brings his narrative to a close at the period when events ceased to correspond with the object of his work. The object itself is neither historical nor scientific, but religious; nor, again, is it religious edification in general, but the satisfaction of a very definite want of the Church which existed at the time when the book was produced.

## 1. THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK.

We may plainly perceive the purpose of the writer, in the first place, by observing the different relation to the gospel in which he places Judaism and Heathenism. He describes the transition of Christianity from the Jews to the Gentiles, but not as though both shared alike in its advantages. He represents the Jews, for whom it was first designed, as rejecting it, though it is offered to them again and again, as persecuting it and thus compelling the apostles to seek another field for their mission; while the Gentiles, to whom the gospel now turns, come forward eagerly asking that they may receive the joyful message, welcome it almost everywhere with delight, and even protect the apostles from Jewish persecution. The persecutions which the apostles have to suffer are almost always represented in the Book of Acts as originating with the Jews. This is the case not only in Jerusalem, iv. 1 sqq., v. 17 sqq., vi. 8 sqq., vii. 54 sqq., xii. 1, 3 sqq., but also in the Gentile world in the field of Paul's mission, in Pisidia, xiii. 50 sqq., in Iconium, xiv. 2, 4, in Lystra, xiv. 19 sqq.,



in Thessalonica, xvii. 5 sqq., in Berea, xvii. 13 sqq. Only a persecution in Philippi and a riot against the apostles in Ephesus originate with the Gentiles, and even then in the former city the wrong which has been committed is confessed and expiated, xvi. 27 sqq., 35 sqq., and in the latter a Gentile formally declares the Christians free from all guilt, xix. 37 sqq. On the other hand, the greater part of the Book of Acts is devoted to magnificent results of the apostolic preaching among the Gentiles. In Athens alone does Paul find an unfruitful soil, and yet even there he founds a little congregation and makes some important acquisitions to Christianity, xvii. 34. And where the Gentile authorities have to do with the apostles, they protect them in their rights against the slanderous accusations of the Jews, and expressly acknowledge their innocence of every kind of crime or civil offence. This is the case with the Roman officials in Philippi, xvi. 35 sqq., in Corinth, xviii. 12 sqq., in Ephesus, xix. 37 sqq., and in Jerusalem, xxiii. 28 sqq., xxv. 25, xxvi. 31 sqq. The first fruits of the preaching of the gospel by Peter and Paul are Roman officers, x. 1 sqq., xiii. 7 sqq. When Paul is in danger of being killed by the Jews, he is delivered by the Romans, xxi. 31 sqq., xxiii. 10; and even when he is a prisoner, the Roman laws leave him at liberty to preach the gospel down to the time when our history of the Acts of the Apostles terminates, xxviii. 30 sq., comp. xxiv. 23. Even the very worst errors of heathenism are an advantage to the gospel, and in Lystra the apostles are joyfully received as gods who have come down from heaven, xiv. 8 sqq., comp. xxviii. 6. Moreover, the prejudices of the Gentiles against the gospel are carefully borne in mind, all confusion between the gospel and the hateful Jewish law being specially provided against, xv. 19 sqq., 28 sq., xvi. 4, political prejudices of Rome against Christianity are resisted, xvii. 7—9, xviii. 14—17, xix. 38, xxiii. 29, xxv. 18 sqq., and the manifold preparations for Christianity through heathenism are pointed out, xiv. 16 sqq., xvii. 22 sq., 27 sqq., from all which it is plain that it must also have been the writer's intention to defend the gospel

against heathenism and the Roman State, in the sight of *heathen* readers, and to recommend it to them.

Nevertheless, the Book of Acts is intended in the first instance for *Christian* readers, and above all it is designed to supply a want of the *Church*. With a view to this also the anomalous position which Jew and Gentile take up in regard to the gospel is of the highest importance. From the time of the Apostle Paul's independent appearance, the central question around which all the movements of Christianity gather is, whether the gospel was intended exclusively or pre-eminently for the Jews, or whether it was originally and equally intended for all nations of the earth; in other words, whether salvation in Christianity still depends upon the observance of the Mosaic law, or only upon faith and self-surrender to the divine grace and righteousness which was offered in the sacrificial death of Jesus. The settlement of the dispute between the Jewish, national and legal gospel of the primitive Christian community in Jerusalem and Paul's gospel, which was designed for all the world and was free from the law, is the main subject not only of the Pauline Epistles but also of all other documents of the apostolic or post-apostolic times; and hence it will be important to us to know what position the writer of the Book of Acts takes up in regard to this great question. He stands, as appears at once from his general statement of the contents of the book, essentially upon the Gentile-Christian side. It is declared, i. 8, that the gospel was originally and equally intended for all nations of the earth; and when it is rejected by Israel, it finds among the Gentiles a favourable soil and produces the richest fruits. But this destination of the gospel for the whole world must not appear as a matter of strife among the apostles themselves, otherwise it would again be brought into question by the Book of Acts itself. It must appear as the basis of the preaching of the gospel which Jesus himself desired and which the apostles unanimously recognized, in order that its full historical claims may thus be established. The strife and controversy of the apostolic times concerning it must be



silenced or concealed. Now Peter was well known as the chief representative, among the apostles, of the Jewish-Christian gospel, while Paul was the original and independent representative of the gospel for the whole world emancipated from the law. The name and figure of the former represented the Jewish-Christian, and of the latter the Gentile-Christian gospel, in the post-apostolic, even as they had already done in the apostolic age. But the writer of the Book of Acts must not take up his position on either side if he is to succeed in his purpose of setting before his readers the original and harmonious recognition of the abolition of all national limitations in the gospel. Instead of this, he must represent Peter and Paul as equals, working together in complete agreement as the representatives of the one gospel among Jews and Gentiles.

Consistently with this, the first part of the book deals mainly with the former apostle, and the second part almost exclusively with the latter. The two are esteemed as of equal rank, to both are the same privileges and the same honour accorded, and Peter is made to appear as Pauline, Paul as Petrine, as possible. Peter pronounces the Gentile-Christian declaration of redemption, ii. 39, iii. 26, takes the first step in the conversion of the Gentiles, x., and himself puts aside the Jewish-Christian prejudices against it, ix. 1—18, xv. 7—12. On the other hand, Paul accepts a portion of the Jewish law for his Gentile-Christian communities, and pleads for it among the Gentiles, xv. 29—31, xvi. 4, xxi. 25. Moreover, it is assumed in the Book of Acts that it is the duty of those who were formerly Jews to continue to observe the Mosaic law, xv. 23 sqq., xxi. 21 sqq., and accordingly Paul here keeps strictly to it. He himself circumcises the son of a Greek because his mother was a Jewess, xvi. 1 sqq. He considers himself bound to observe the Jewish festivals and to keep the Passover in Jerusalem, xviii. 21, xxiv. 11. He takes upon himself the vow of a Nazirite and bears the expense of a similar vow for others, xviii. 18, xxi. 26. He represents himself to the Jews as a believer in the Scriptures, in the old sense of the

phrase, xxiv. 14—17, and as a Pharisee, xxiii. 6. And though so often rejected by them, still to the very last he turns in his preaching always in the first place to the Jews, xvii. 2, xxviii. 17 sqq.

Hence, while the author of the Book of Acts desires to demonstrate by his history of the apostolic age that the gospel was originally intended equally for the whole world, thereby declaring himself as a representative of the Pauline gospel, and is so far from any adhesion to a strict and privileged Jewish nationality that he actually regards the Jews as the fiercest enemies of Christianity; at the same time he is very far from taking up the position which was actually taken by the Apostle Paul. He has no desire to impress upon his contemporaries the validity of the Mosaic law for the Jews, or of the extracts mentioned in xv. 20 for the Gentile Christians; at the same time he endeavours by means of the picture of a Christianity of the apostolic age which is half under the law, to justify a Christianity which has become again partly under the law. With this purpose he turns away from the contradictions of the apostolic doctrine, and puts into the mouth of all the representatives of the gospel in the apostolic age, the doctrine of *his own age*. He writes neither for Pauline nor for Jewish Christians, for this distinction has retired behind a new conception of the gospel which has adopted from Paul the abolition of all national limitations, and from Jewish Christianity all the rest of its didactic substance. He is acquainted with the Epistles of Paul and the principles of his gospel, the doctrine of Justification not by the law (xiii. 39), but by faith (xv. 11). But he does not bring out this gospel clearly and logically, and he establishes the universal destiny of Christianity for the whole world in a manner quite different from that of Paul. Paul's gospel, so exalted and yet founded upon the deepest wants of the heart and the necessity of his own thought, here appears materialized and reduced to a few meagre and general propositions. The fact is, that the Pauline argument for Christianity free from the law, which rests entirely upon the free grace of God, and can only find satisfaction in unconditional



self-surrender to it, made too great demands upon the intellect and the will of man, to be able long to remain valid, without admixture of the law. There is in the natural man an ineradicable tendency to a ceremonial service of God, and to reliance in respect of the whole of life upon the law; and a great ecclesiastical community appears indeed absolutely to require a certain ceremonial regulation of the life and belief of its members in order that it may hold together both externally and internally. Hence the striking divergence between the doctrine of the Pauline Epistles and that of the author of the Acts of the Apostles. In the Epistles, Paul rests his right to abolish every distinction between Jews and Gentiles solely upon the decisive significance which he assigns to the death of Jesus on the cross. This death alone has wrought full satisfaction for our sins, which was impossible without it. It has given to us righteousness, and thereby has overthrown all reliance upon our observance of the law, and thus has abolished every privilege of the Judaism which is of the law, and removed every barrier between Jew and Gentile. On the other hand, the Paul of Acts supports his right to preach to the Gentiles, not upon a practical spiritual necessity, but always upon the miraculous appearance on the way to Damascus, upon the express command of God confirmed by a miracle (xxii. 5 sqq. 18, 21, xxvi. 12 sqq. 19). The death of Christ indeed is regarded in the Book of Acts, as in every form of the gospel, as the condition of forgiveness of sins (xx. 28), but nowhere in the book is the conclusion drawn that the death upon the cross was a power sufficient in itself for this, and that therefore the endeavour after righteousness through the works of the law is useless, vain and even pernicious, although the speeches of Paul would have afforded the most abundant opportunity for the exposition of this principle of his gospel. In the Epistles, Paul, knowing no righteousness save that which is of grace, demands only the appropriation of it by complete surrender to it, i.e. by faith. The Paul of the Book of Acts, on the other hand, demands faith no doubt (xiii. 39, xvii. 31, xx. 21, xxvi. 27),

but here we do not find this faith, either in the mouth of Paul or anywhere else, made to rest upon the fact of the crucifixion, and it is never regarded as the exclusive condition of salvation, and opposed to the fulfilment of the law, not even in xiii. 39 (comp. the explanation given in the note on this passage). On the contrary, the word faith is used here only in the general sense of the acceptance of the new teaching, the essence of which is the doctrine of the Messiahship of Jesus and the forgiveness of sins (x. 42, xvii. 31, xx. 21, 43). It is submission to the fact that Jesus is proved to be the Messiah (vi. 7). Hence we find in the Book of Acts a more or less vague conception of penance or conversion required as a condition of salvation (ii. 38, iii. 19, v. 31, viii. 22, x. 43, xi. 18, xiii. 38, xvii. 30, xx. 21, xxii. 16, xxvi. 18, 20). The position which the Paul of the Book of Acts maintains is assumed throughout the book, namely, that the gospel both of Peter and of Paul agrees as to its doctrine with orthodox Judaism (xxiii. 6, xxiv. 14, xxvi. 22, xxviii. 23), only with this difference, that the Pharisaic doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is maintained in relation to Jesus, he is acknowledged as the Messiah, and every national privilege of the Jews is annulled. There are scarcely any traces whatever of any deeper comprehension of the peculiar religious significance of the person of Jesus, such as we find in Paul (see note on iii. 15).

Hence it follows that whoever tries to interpret the Book of Acts by the apostolic times, and to find in it an exact picture of them, must of necessity place himself point by point in direct opposition to the genuine documents of those times, especially the Epistles of Paul, or else he must harmonize them with the representation of the Book of Acts in a superficial manner and by means of unsupported assumptions. And ultimately he cannot but do injustice after all either to the author of the Book of Acts or to Paul. The book can only be rightly understood when we recognize in it the attempt to justify to the Church itself a later stage of the development of Christianity by means of a special representation of the period of its own foundation, a representation cor-



responding to an ecclesiastical Christianity which had advanced in its conquest of the world, but had degenerated in itself, and consequently essentially different from any true picture of apostolic Christianity. But this attempt on the part of the author can only be blamed by those who are unaware that such free treatment of historical material was quite usual among the ancients, and was indulged in without the slightest sense of dishonesty. It was, moreover, especially common in the New Testament times, and in regard to all matters not purely scientific.

## 2. CREDIBILITY.

While, however, the author himself places the historical interest of the book far behind its religious interest, we, who are mainly dependent upon it for our knowledge of the apostolic age, cannot but regard the question of its historic credibility as of the greatest importance. The inquiry itself cannot be separated from the further questions, whether the writer availed himself of older written sources of information, and if so, of what kind these sources were. It is quite clear that the first of these questions must be answered in the affirmative; for it is not to be supposed that one who certainly stood at some distance from the apostolic age could have composed such a work either from his own or other men's recollection of oral tradition, still less that he should simply have invented it all. The nature of his sources, however, we can for the most part no longer ascertain. The only one that we can clearly distinguish is an account of the journeys of the Apostle Paul, which may be recognized in four places in the second half of the book by the sudden change from the use of the third person to that of the first person plural "we" (xvi. 10—17, xx. 4—15, xxi. 1—18, xxvii. 1—xxviii. 16). That this account does not originate with the writer himself is indisputable. For no narrator changes without warning from the third to the first person, and vice versa. And again, it is clear that the use of the first or third person does not correspond with the

presence or absence of the narrator. And, finally, it would be impossible to understand why the writer, if he accompanied the Apostle Paul, should have described so exactly, even to the smallest details, unimportant matters, such as the voyages, and on the other hand despatched long and important periods with a very general, cursory and lifeless description (comp. xviii. 22, 23, xx. 1—3, xxiv. 27, xxviii. 30, with the detailed accounts of voyages in xvi. 10—17, xxvii. 1—xxviii. 16, and the picture of the trial of Paul in six chapters, xxi.—xxvi.). The author, however, of those parts which are distinguished by the occurrence of the word “we,” may be recognized by the detail and exactness of his statements with regard to time and place, and by the vividness of his narrative, as an eye-witness, i.e. as a fellow-traveller and companion of Paul; and we have no reasonable ground for doubting that he is the Luke of ecclesiastical tradition (comp. Philem. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Col. iv. 14). And this probability approaches as near to certainty as anything in connection with this question can do, when we consider that the superscription, “according to Luke,” prefixed to the first part of the work, could never have been placed there by the collectors and arrangers of the books of the New Testament, unless they had had some distinct tradition as to the share of this companion of Paul in the work of proclaiming the gospel among the nations. It was probably of deliberate purpose that, in his narrative of the three most important episodes in the spread of the gospel by Paul, the passage into Europe, xvi. 10—17, the conclusion of the three missionary journeys, xx. 5—xxi. 8, and the journey to Rome, xxvii. 1—xxviii. 16, the writer presented the account in its original journalistic style, in order that here the authenticity of his description might be apparent. As a rule, however, he has only quoted this account which he had before him where it agreed with the purpose of his own work, or at least did not interfere with it. Long periods, upon which this source of information cannot have been silent, are entirely passed over, e.g. the whole of the third journey, of which only the halt at Ephesus is de-



scribed in detail, xviii. 23—xx. 4. Further, he has inserted into what he has taken from this source passages intended to support the general aim of the book, some of which are still easily recognizable, e.g. the address to the elders of the community at Miletus, xx. 17—38; the detailed account of the capture and trial of Paul, xxi. 19—xxvi. 32; such passages as xxvii. 21—26, 33—36; and the conclusion of the whole work, xxviii. 17—31. What the writer of the Book of Acts has retained consists for the most part of very careful statements as to the routes and the dates of Paul's journeys. And all these we may regard as unconditionally trustworthy.

As for the rest of the book, it may very well be supposed that the detailed narratives concerning the Apostle Peter, and some other sections also, were based upon information drawn from special written sources, the nature of which indeed can no longer be determined. So far, however, as we can test and judge the Book of Acts by comparing it with other sources of information on the same subjects, and particularly with the Pauline Epistles, we find that it is strongly coloured and indeed altered by the purpose of the book itself, especially in all that relates to the contests between Paul and the Twelve. Still we may probably take its historical statements as being on the whole really historical, and having a basis of fact and genuine tradition, although it must be confessed that in many of the accounts we can now no longer separate the portions derived from sources already to some extent legendary, and the writer's own alterations, from the original basis of the narrative. The connected *discourses*, however, which appear in the Book of Acts bear so distinctly the mark of the peculiar views of the writer, that they must be regarded almost entirely as his own free composition (see notes on i. 18, ii. 39, iii. 26, v. 34 sqq. 40, vii. 1, x. 34 sqq., xiii. 15 sqq., &c.). Notwithstanding this, the book is still of great value, apart from the importance of its contributions to our knowledge of the religious life of the period of its composition, as the unique, continuous source for the history of the apostolic times,

provided only that it is used with care. For details we must refer our readers to the commentary below.

## DATE.

The date of the composition of the Book of Acts can only be approximately determined. That the position of the writer is alien to the apostolic age is clear, and though he breaks off his narrative in the year of Paul's death, without mentioning the death itself, which took place in the Neronian persecution of the year 64, the reason of this is not, as might be supposed, that the book was written before that event. The writer would to a great extent have counteracted the whole purpose of his work if he had concluded with an account of a fearful persecution of the Christians by the Gentiles, to which the apostle of the Gentiles fell a sacrifice. According to the genuine Epistles written during his imprisonment, Paul did not expect to be put to death (Phil. ii. 24, Philem. 22). In the Book of Acts, however, he is represented as distinctly foretelling his death before he is taken prisoner in Jerusalem, i.e. at least four years before 64 (xx. 25, xxi. 13), and hence it is evident that the writer has put into the mouth of Paul in the form of prophecy what had long been known to him as an accomplished fact. A somewhat firmer ground for fixing the date of the book is afforded perhaps by the following circumstance: In four passages it is stated that Gentile officials distinctly declared the Christians as such to be liable to no civil penalty simply on the ground of their religious position or name, and that a charge against them could only be heard on the ground of some definite and demonstrable offence against the law. This is the decision given by Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, when the Jews accuse Paul before him (xviii. 14 sqq.), by the town clerk of Ephesus, on occasion of the disturbance caused by Demetrius (xix. 37 sq.), by the Roman chiliarch Claudius Lysias (xxiii. 29), and by Porcius Festus, governor of Judea, at the trial of Paul (xxv. 18). Now it is quite certain



that this separation of the civil from the religious aspect of Christianity was not made by the Romans in the apostolic times, but was first made altogether temporarily by the emperor Trajan in regard to the trials of the Christians in Bithynia in the year 112. This distinction, however, is all the more vehemently insisted upon by the Christian apologists of the second century whose writings have come down to us, and hence the Book of Acts may be placed, not indeed with absolute certainty but with great probability, at the beginning of this series of apologetic writings, i.e. about 100—120 A.D. Moreover, the difference between the accounts in Luke xxiv. and Acts i. as to the relations between the resurrection and the ascension in point of time (comp. Acts i. 3), also indicates pretty clearly that a considerable period elapsed between the composition of the third Gospel and that of the Book of Acts, during which the writer had been led by new sources of information and different traditions to take another view of the matter.

#### PLACE OF COMPOSITION.

Rome may be regarded with great probability as the place where the Book of Acts was composed. This supposition is supported by the oldest ecclesiastical tradition, and further by the circumstance that the writer assumes that his readers are acquainted with the geography of Italy, while on the other hand he enters, here and there at least, into explanations with regard to other countries (compare, for example, xxviii. 12, 13, 15, with xiii. 14, xiv. 6, xvi. 12). But, above all, the purpose of the book itself may be best understood on the supposition that the writer had in his mind, in the first instance, the citizens and officials of the imperial city and the Christian community there as his readers. The book represents the victorious progress of the gospel as culminating in the journey of Paul to Rome and his residence there. In the last seven chapters, other countries and other communities are not even mentioned. Paul's journey to

Rome is alluded to eight chapters before its occurrence (xix. 21), and from that time forward almost the whole of the narrative is written with direct reference to this journey. Its occasion and significance are then set before the reader with the fullest detail in the account of the trial of Paul at Jerusalem and Cæsarea (xxi.—xxvi.), and the journey itself is then described with incomparably greater detail than any other of the missionary journeys, even down to the most unimportant incidents (xxvii., xxviii. 1—16). Further, the stress which is laid in the Book of Acts upon Paul's Roman citizenship (xvi. 37, xxii. 25), and the prominence given to the just and kind treatment which he meets with at the hands of the Roman officials, point to Rome as the place of its composition. And still more decisively does the conclusion of the whole book favour this supposition (xxviii. 25—28). For the apostle here finally meets with the very same experience in Rome which he is described as meeting with throughout the whole Book of Acts, the hostile rejection of the gospel on the part of the Jews, its joyful acceptance by the Gentiles. Thus the final incident points out the imperial city as the destination of the book, and hence probably as the place where it was composed.

The fact that the superscription of the first work of our author contains the name of Luke, is sufficiently explained by the ancient and credible tradition that the sections in the second part of the book in which the narrator uses the first person, "we," are from the hand of this companion of the Apostle Paul.



## THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

i.—ix. 30.

The first great division of the book. The founding of the church in Palestine.

### CHAPTER i.

Christ's last commands and the restoration of the full number of the apostles.

1. *The former treatise* is the Gospel according to Luke, which is by the same writer as the Book of Acts, and is dedicated to the same person, a Gentile of whom we know nothing further (Luke i. 1—3). The "second treatise" begins in ver. 3, without being definitely spoken of here as the second. The writer indeed goes straight on from the mention of the apostles in ver. 2 in an unbroken sentence. On the connection between the Book of Acts and the Gospel, comp. p. 256 (and also p. 48).

2. *Taken up*, i.e. into heaven.—*Commandments* should be "commandment." The commandment or commission here mentioned is given in ver. 4.

3. This forty days' intercourse of the risen Jesus with his disciples is only mentioned by the writer of the Book of Acts, who elsewhere (x. 41, xiii. 31) assumes that the intercourse between Jesus and the apostles after the resurrection lasted for some time. This view is contrary, however, not only to probability, but also to the other account given by the writer himself (Luke xxiv. 51).—[There is nothing in the Greek corresponding to the *infallible* of our translators.]

4. *And being assembled together with them* should be "And when he was eating with them." Comp. x. 41, Luke xxiv. 42.—*That they should not depart from Jerusalem*: According to the earlier representation of these events, the appearances of the risen Jesus took place in Galilee, whither Jesus had himself directed his disciples, Matt. xxviii. 10 sqq. For evident reasons these appearances were transferred in the later tradition to Jeru-

saalem, the place where Jesus suffered and died, and where subsequently his disciples underwent their severest probation.—*Which ye have heard*: comp. Luke xxiv. 49.

5. Comp. xi. 16.

6. This is a different gathering from the one mentioned in ver. 4, and is the last at which he appears (see ver. 9).—That the disciples even after the death of Jesus still expected the establishment of a material kingdom, and indeed of a kingdom limited to Israel, is in itself quite probable. It was only very gradually and after severe struggles that the Christians became conscious of the purely spiritual purpose of the heavenly kingdom, and of its universality. Even the verse which here follows (7) does not break away entirely from the first idea.

8. This verse states the subject and contents of the Book of Acts. Hence the great stress and fulness of detail, as compared with Luke xxiv. 51, which characterize the description of the ascension. There are also many important differences between the two accounts.—It is doubtful whether Jesus himself actually gave the command to preach to the Gentiles. Comp. note on x. 42 and Luke xxiv. 47.

10. The visions and appearances of angels which are so frequently met with in the Book of Acts give additional importance to the epochs with which they are connected. Comp. v. 19, viii. 26, ix. 4 sqq., x. 7, xii. 7 sqq., xvi. 9, xviii. 9, xxii. 17 sqq., xxvii. 23.

11. Consistently with the purpose of the book, the apostles are here directed to the earth as the scene of their labours, and are discouraged from the expectation of the immediate return of Jesus which prevailed in the apostolic age. Comp. note on ii. 17.

12. The writer has transferred the scene of the ascension from Bethany, where the earlier account represents it as taking place, to the Mount of Olives. Comp. Luke xxiv. 51. A Sabbath-day's journey is two thousand paces; so that this would apply only to the Mount of Olives, not to Bethany.

13. *An upper room*: "The upper room" of a private house, comp. xii. 12.—See Luke vi. 14 sqq. [*Brother of James* should be "son of James;" see note on Matt. x. 3.]

14. *The women*: The writer probably means in the first place the women who remained with Jesus even after the flight of the



disciples, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James. Luke xxiv. 10.—Mary the mother of Jesus, according to the unanimous testimony of the Evangelists, was not at first upon the side of Jesus, neither were his brothers (Luke viii. 19 sqq.). They must have been converted after the resurrection.

15. (*The number of names, &c.*), should be “(and there was a crowd of about a hundred and twenty persons together).”—The number a hundred and twenty is only approximate. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 6) speaks of five hundred brethren to whom Jesus appeared in Galilee. Of this, indeed, the Book of Acts knows nothing; for it represents all the appearances of Jesus after the resurrection as taking place in Jerusalem, and the proclamation of the gospel as emanating entirely from Jerusalem.

18. The death of Judas, as described in this and the following verses, does not agree with the account given in Matt. xxvii. 3—10, according to which the field was purchased by the chief priests after the suicide of the traitor. It seems that we have here a legend originating in the name Aceldama and two disconnected passages in the Psalms. These two passages in the Psalms, which are quoted with some freedom by the writer from the Greek translation, contain in the original nothing that could be referred to the traitor.—The freedom with which the writer deals with his historical materials is evident from the incorrect assumption in verse 19 that Peter was speaking in Greek.

20. *His bishoprick* should be “his apostolic office.”

22. The Book of Acts lays the chief stress, not upon the death of Jesus upon the cross, which Paul regards as of decisive importance, but upon the external confirmation of the resurrection. In this the proof of Jesus’ Messianic office is looked for. Comp. pp. 262 sq.—*Be ordained to be*, “be made.”

23. The restoration of the number twelve assumes that these twelve apostles were originally intended only for the twelve tribes of Israel. This intention is distinctly expressed in Matt. x. 5 sq., and historically is indubitable. The Book of Acts, in spite of the very different position which it takes up, recognizes this as the original state of affairs (xiii. 46, xviii. 6), and it is certainly not a mere accident that the writer never assigns to Paul the name of apostle.—There are other evidences dating from the apostolic age of a successor to Judas having been

appointed: Paul, for example (1 Cor. xv. 5), and Rev. xii. 1, xxi. 14, assume that there are twelve apostles.—Of the two men from whom the choice was made nothing further is known. We must assume that both were considered equally fitted for the office.

26. *Gave forth their lots*, “cast lots for them.”

## CHAPTER ii.

The pouring out of the spirit. The first speech of Peter and its results.

1. *Pentecost*: By this we must understand the Jewish festival of first fruits, fifty days after the Passover. Probably on this day the memory of the delivery of the Law on Sinai was also celebrated. In both aspects the writer regards the Jewish festival as containing a significant prophetic reference to that which he here describes as fulfilled in Christianity.—We must not suppose that the temple is the place of their gathering. If it had been so, the writer would have indicated the fact in some way. It is rather a private house.

2. *Wind*: This is not to be taken literally. It only serves the writer as an image of the supernatural occurrence of the descent of the spirit, which is regarded in the light of a miracle.

3. *Cloven* should be “distributed.”—*It sat upon each of them*: i.e. the tongue-shaped fire.

4. *And began to speak with other tongues*: The sequel shows that what is meant is, that the Christians spoke miraculously in languages with which they had hitherto been unacquainted, and it neither increases nor decreases the miracle to suppose that the writer only intended to represent the foreigners as *hearing* their own languages, and not the apostles as actually *speaking* them. If the writer, however, had had in his mind any such artificial distinction between a miracle of *hearing* and a miracle of *speaking*, he must certainly have clearly indicated this in some part or other of his narrative. It is true that we cannot prove that a miraculous speaking in foreign languages is what is meant by “speaking in tongues” where it is mentioned in other parts of the book (as in x. 46, xix. 6); there, indeed, this would be a decidedly forced interpretation. The very fact, however, that the writer himself had never witnessed this phenomenon of the apostolic age, seems to have caused him to leave the vague



expression unexplained in passages where he had not, as he has here, other reasons for a fuller description of the occurrence. At any rate our author means something very different from that which the apostle Paul calls "speaking in tongues," and concerning which he has left us evidence which is both unimpeachable and clear, 1 Cor. xiv. 2—33 (comp. 1 Cor. xii. 10). Paul describes indistinct and disconnected utterances which were *unintelligible* to the hearers, and were the result of an enthusiasm and ecstasy in which the speaker himself lost all consciousness. It appears, then, that the first powerful manifestation of this peculiar phenomenon, which is one of the characteristics of the depth and vehemence of the new spirit of Christianity for which no words were sufficient, was afterwards transformed by legend into a power of speaking foreign languages, and this legend is then further developed by the author of the Book of Acts. The consciousness of the community that it possessed through Christ the holy spirit of God was incorporated in a legend of a *single extraordinary* occurrence which took place in Jerusalem, the source of the gospel, and which could only find its first expression in speech in foreign languages. According to the Old Testament narrative, the nations of the earth were separated by diversity of languages as a penalty for their disobedience to God. By the spirit of Christ, with its universal sway, they must be re-united. According to Jewish legend, when the Law was given, the voice of God was uttered in all the languages of the various nations. The Gospel, which was to be intelligible to all the world, must similarly be expressed from the first in a manner intelligible to all nations.—Possibly the occurrence narrated in 1 Cor. xv. 6 is the historical nucleus of the legend.

5. *Out of every nation*: This expression is not to be taken literally.—*Devout men*: These are not Gentiles, but Israelites from foreign countries who were then residing in Jerusalem.

9. *Judea*: The language of the dwellers in Judea in the mouth of the Christians could not amaze any one. They are only added that they may not be found wanting in an enumeration of all possible nations.—*Asia* must here be understood in the narrower sense in which the name included the western districts of Asia Minor (Mysia, Lydia and Caria), with Ephesus as its capital. It is commonly spoken of as Proconsular Asia.

10. *Strangers of Rome* should be “sojourners from Rome.” *Jews and proselytes*: i.e. Jews and proselytes who had come to Jerusalem from the countries mentioned.

11. It was by no means the case that all these different countries had different languages. In many of them the language was the same. The writer is only concerned with a long enumeration of different countries, and he made no investigations on the subject of their languages. In his enumeration of the nations he is of course limited to that part of the world known to the ancients.

14. In the first section of the Book of Acts, Peter is always the spokesman of the primitive community at Jerusalem. In his speech (vv. 14—36) he starts from the phenomenon of speaking in foreign languages, in order that he may demonstrate from it that this is the Messianic time which was prophesied, and that Jesus is the Messiah.

15. *The third hour*: about nine o'clock in the morning. Before this first hour of prayer the Israelites might not partake of anything.

16. Comp. Joel iii. 1—5 [A. V. ii. 28—32]. The Christians had the best grounds and the fullest opportunities for applying to themselves the Old Testament promise of the pouring forth of the spirit.

17. *In the last days*: i.e. before the last judgment of ver. 20, and, according to the ideas of our author, before the return of Christ, which (i. 7—11, and other passages) he expected would be soon, but not so soon as others looked for it; for example, the writer of the Revelation (Rev. i. 1, xxii. 6, 7, 20) or of the Gospel according to Matthew (Matt. x. 23, xxiv. 34). Comp. note on Acts iii. 21.

22. *Wonders and signs* are regarded throughout the Book of Acts as a testimony and a ground of belief, e.g. xv. 12, 16. Jesus expresses a different opinion, according to Matt. xii. 38, 39, xvi. 1—4; comp. John iv. 48.

23. This verse should read, “Who was delivered up to you according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hands of ungodly men have crucified and slain.” The guilt of the Israelites in the death of Jesus is strongly emphasized throughout the Book of Acts, e.g. iii. 13 sqq., iv. 10, &c.—The “ungodly” are the Romans.



24. *Not possible*: on account of the fulfilment of the passages from the Psalms which follow, and perhaps also because the writer regards Jesus as the "Prince of life," iii. 15.

25. [*Foresaw* should be "beheld"]—Psalm xvi. 8—11. The passage is quoted for the sake of the last two verses, which are laxly interpreted of the resurrection of Jesus. Properly understood, they are simply a general expression of the confidence of the pious in the time of distress and mortal danger.

28. *With thy countenance* should be "before thy face," i.e. in thy presence.

30. *That of the fruit of his loins, &c.*, should be "that he would set one of the fruit of his loins on the throne." The reference is to Ps. cxxxii. 1, where the dominion of the descendants of David is spoken of.

33. *The promise of the Holy Ghost* should be "the promised holy spirit."

34, 35. Free application to the Messiah of a passage in which an Israelitish king is originally spoken of. Ps. cx. 1.

39. *All that are afar off*: i.e. the Gentiles.—This passage corresponds entirely with the statement of the contents and plan of the work (i. 8). And the very fact that Peter has afterwards to be taught that the gospel is intended to be universal, and to extend even to the Gentiles, by means of a special divine command (x. 9 sqq., 34), only shows us how freely our writer has dealt with his historical materials, and especially with all that he puts into the mouth of his speakers.

40. *Untoward* should be "perverted."

41. The number of 3000 conversions on one day must arouse considerable doubt. We have already learnt from i. 15 how inexact the writer is in his use of numbers. The disproportionately large number here given is explained partly by the natural tendency of legends to magnify everything, and partly by the great weight which the writer attaches to the first grand miraculous action of the spirit.

42. *In the apostles' doctrine and fellowship*: "In the apostles' teaching and in fellowship."—*Breaking of bread* denotes social meals when the Lord's Supper was taken, called ágapai.

43. The Book of Acts represents the apostles as enjoying an amount of respect and influence among the non-christian popu-

lation which certainly passes far beyond the limits of historical probability (ii. 47, iv. 21, v. 11, 12, 16, 26).

44, 45. In such an entire abolition of private property, we recognize the true spirit of Christ, even though we cannot but recognize the actual enforcement of it, in the manner and to the extent here described, as impracticable and legendary. The apostle Paul knows nothing of any such thorough-going community of property, and the Book of Acts itself cannot conceal the fact that in the Christian community at Jerusalem there were poor persons on the one hand (vi. 1) and householders on the other hand (xii. 12). Moreover, the Book of Acts (v. 4) represents this community of goods not as a compulsory regulation, but only as a fact.

46. The appearance of the first Christians in the temple, to which other passages in the Book of Acts testify (iii. 1, 8, 11, v. 12, 21, 42), shows the still unbroken connection between Christianity and Judaism.

47. *And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved:* "And the Lord added daily those who were being saved."

### iii. 1—iv. 31.

The healing of a lame man by Peter, and his new proclamation of the gospel before the people and before the high council.

### CHAPTER iii.

1. *The ninth hour:* about three o'clock in the afternoon.

2. The gate of the temple here spoken of was probably at the eastern entrance.

4. *Look on us:* These words are intended to fix upon the apostle the attention not only of the sick man, but also of all the spectators and of all readers.

6 sqq. There is no mention here of the faith which Jesus demanded of those whom he healed. The miracle is evidently introduced for its own sake, to show the astonishing results of the apostolic power, the impression made by the gospel, and the testimony borne to it. Compare, in contrast to this, e.g., Matt. ix. 22, 29, 30.

11. *The porch that is called Solomon's:* a portico on the east side of the temple.



12. *At this* should be “at this man.”—Peter’s speech, which here follows, again (like his first speech, ii. 14 sqq.) deduces the Messianic dignity of Jesus from the miracle that has taken place, and then proceeds to call the people to conversion, in order that at the second coming of Christ they also may be participators of the blessings of his kingdom, which are destined in the first place for the Israelites.

13. [*Son* : The word here rendered “son” means in the first place “child,” either boy or girl, but is used both in classical Greek and in the New Testament in the sense of “servant” (e.g. Matt. viii. 6, 13 ; Luke i. 54, 69, xii. 45, “the men-servants,” xv. 26, &c.). It is applied to Jesus by the writer of the Book of Acts in iii. 13, 26, iv. 27, 30, and should probably be rendered “servant” in these passages.]—*When* should be “although.”

15. In the words *Prince* (or “author”) *of life*, we find the one solitary and vague indication of the higher conception of the nature of the person of Jesus, which is otherwise entirely wanting in the Book of Acts.

16. *Through* should be “on account of.”—The faith here meant is the faith of the apostle. Comp. note on vv. 6 sqq.

17. *Through ignorance* : i.e. not being aware of the Messiahship of Jesus.—This mild condemnation, taken in connection with the rest of the narrative, only serves to increase the guilt of the Israelites, inasmuch as in the sequel by their obstinacy they show themselves to be quite unworthy of the clemency which is offered to them. Comp. further note on ii. 23.

19. The blotting out of sin takes place, according to the Book of Acts, through baptism, upon which the greatest stress is laid throughout the book (ii. 38). There is no mention at all of reconciliation simply through grace offered in the death of Christ upon the cross. The teaching of Paul is different (1 Cor. i. 17 ; Rom. vi. 4).—*The times of refreshing* : i.e. after the return of Christ.

21. *Until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken*, should be “Until the times of the restoration of all things of which God hath spoken.”—*The times of the restoration* are not the same as *the times of refreshment* ; i.e. the phrase refers not to the return of Christ, but to the intermediate period between the first and second coming, during which, according to the view of

the writer, the kingdom of God will be prepared in the appointed manner by the separation of those who receive it from those who do not. This is the same as *the last days* of ii. 17—21.

22. *For Moses truly said unto the fathers*, should be “For Moses said.”—In this and the following verse we have again a passage from the Old Testament loosely quoted from memory and loosely applied to the Messiah (Deut. xviii. 15).

24. *These days*, which have now already begun.

25. *Thy seed* here as in Gal. iii. 16 is Christ.

26. [*Son*: see note on ver. 13].—*Unto you first*: If we consider the speech as the production of the writer, we see here, as everywhere else, his own view of the historical course of the development of Christianity. The gospel was not intended for the Israelites first of all, but all the same it was first preached to them, and in consequence of their rejection of it it took its way to the Gentiles.—The statement (made here and in ver. 25) that the gospel was intended for all nations is impossible at this time in the mouth of Peter (comp. x. 9 sqq., 34 sq.). We have the more reason then for regarding it as the fundamental principle of the writer of the Book of Acts.

#### CHAPTER iv.

1. The Sadducees appear throughout the Book of Acts as the worst opponents of Christianity, while the Pharisees approach more nearly to it (v. 17, 34, xv. 5, xxiii. 6 sqq.). According to the gospel history, on the other hand, and all other indications, the Sadducees, who had no points of contact with the gospel, were indifferent to it, while the Pharisees were its chief opponents. (Comp. Matt. xxiii. 1 sqq., and the Pharisee Paul, Gal. i. 13.) It is probably only for the sake of supporting his own fundamental principle that the writer of Acts brings forward the doctrinal disagreement with the Sadducees in regard to the resurrection of the dead, and thereby throws into the background the Pauline opposition to the law (iv. 2, xxiii. 6 sqq. Comp. also p. 260).

4. See note on ii. 41.

6. Here, as in Luke iii. 2, Annas appears as the officiating high-priest. As a matter of fact it was Caiaphas who then filled the office, although Annas still exercised considerable authority



after his deposition in the year 14 A.D.—Of John and Alexander we know nothing definite.

7. The question can only be intended to extort from the apostles a criminal acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah.

10—12. A solemn proclamation of the gospel to Israel, whereby the subsequent rejection of Jesus on the part of the Jews is rendered inexcusable.

11. Comp. Matt. xxi. 42, Psalm cxviii. 22.

13. This verse should be rendered, "But when they perceived the joy [better 'boldness,' as in A.V. The word means, properly, 'freedom of speech'] of Peter and John, and had learned that they were unlearned folk and laymen, they marvelled, and recognized them at once as having been with Jesus."—This astonishment, and not recognizing the apostles till now as laymen and disciples of Jesus, is scarcely credible (comp. ii. 41, 43).

16—21. The account here given of the proceedings of the high council is rendered so incredible by the acknowledgment in ver. 16, and the utter aimlessness of the threat in ver. 17 after this, that we can only suppose that the writer has dealt with great freedom with the historical materials that lay before him. Perhaps his materials had already been moulded to some extent in favour of Christianity in the course of tradition. Testimony to the gospel in the mouth of its enemies naturally appeared particularly serviceable for his purpose.

19, 20. Freedom from every restrictive external influence based upon the deepest sacred inner necessity.

24. *Lord, thou art God, which hast made*, should be "Lord, it is thou who hast made."—That they should utter a free prayer of this kind *with one accord* is scarcely credible. The writer does not seem to have had any special authority for this, any more than for the speeches put in the mouth of the apostles.

25. *People*: "peoples."—Comp. Ps. ii. 1. The Jews regarded all anonymous psalms as Davidic.

27. Herod Antipas (according to our author's gospel alone, Luke xxiii. 11) had mocked Jesus.—[*Child*: see iii. 13.]

30. Here again belief is based upon signs and wonders, and the earthquake in the next verse corresponds with this view as a miraculous sign that the prayer is heard. (Comp. note on ii. 22.) [*Child*: see iii. 13.]

## iv. 32—v. 16.

The power of the holy spirit in the Christian community: Community of goods, a punitive miracle performed by Peter, the growth of the Church.

33. *Great grace*: i. e. great favour with the people.

34. This further advance in the practice of community of goods of ii. 44 sq. must be judged by the remarks there made.

36 sq. Corresponding to this eminent example of self-denial in community of goods, we have in v. 1 a similarly eminent instance of the desecration of this working of the holy spirit by hypocrisy and selfishness, the consequence of which is a punitive miracle performed by Peter.—*Barnabas* is the subsequent companion of the apostle Paul, and the mediator between him and the primitive community in Jerusalem (ix. 27, xi. 25 sq., 30, xii. 25, &c.).

## CHAPTER V.

1. The example here given of the exercise of miraculous powers of punishment on the part of Peter, taken in connection with the context, serves essentially to exalt the idea of the apostolic power. This exalted idea, however, does not agree with the picture of the apostolic age which we find in the Pauline Epistles.—We know nothing further of the man and wife here mentioned.

3 sq. Peter is here placed on a complete equality with the holy spirit which speaks through him.

4. *Whiles it remained*: i. e. remained unsold.—*Was it not thine own?* should be “did it not remain thine own?”

5. The effect of the words of Peter, in the connection in which it is found, can only be understood as a miracle. Every natural explanation is absurd.

8. *And Peter answered unto her*: i. e. to her greeting.

9. Three hours elapse (comp. ver. 7) before those who have gone to bury Ananias return. The “unclean” burial-places were at a considerable distance from the city.

10. It would be an injustice to the writer to condemn or even to judge this miracle on purely moral grounds. The only point in the writer’s mind is the high idea of the first effects of the holy spirit which he intends to convey by it. The general remarks in vv. 11, 12, serve the same purpose. (Comp. ii. 43.)



12. The mark of parenthesis before *and* should be omitted here, and placed at the beginning of ver. 14.—*Solomon's porch*: see note on iii. 11.

13. The reverent fear of the Christians on the part of the people as here described is very improbable in itself, but fits in very well with the rest of our author's picture.

14. As the *insomuch that* of verse 15 is directly connected with ver. 13, this verse must be regarded as an interpolation.—*And believers were the more added to the Lord*, should be "And more and more believers were added to the Lord."

15. As here wonderful cures are said to have been produced by the shadow of Peter, so in xix. 11 sq. the same effects are said to be produced by the handkerchiefs of Paul. This mythical exaggeration of the idea of the power of the apostles actually goes beyond any well-authenticated historical account of the healings performed by Jesus himself, and is only to be explained as the production of legend, and from the later standpoint of the writer of the book.

#### v. 17—42.

New victory over the enemy.

17. *The high priest*: according to iv. 6, Annas, but in reality Caiaphas.—*Sadducees*: see note on iv. 1.

18. *In the common prison* should be "into public ward."

19. The deliverance by means of the angel does not really alter the position of the apostles at all. It only serves, in the connection in which it stands, as a new miraculous divine testimony to the gospel. Comp. notes on iv. 16 sqq. and i. 10.

24. *The chief priests*: i.e. those who were of high-priestly family, and the heads of the different classes of priests.—*They doubted of them*: "they were perplexed about them."

34 sqq. Gamaliel was the grandson of the famous doctor of the law, Hillel. According to xxii. 3, he was the teacher of the apostle Paul, and he was otherwise known as a celebrated teacher.—That the speech which follows is uttered by a Pharisee, is consistent with the close connection which the writer of the Book of Acts assumes to have existed between Pharisaism and Christianity, to which attention has been called in the note on iv. 1. The speech itself, however, is undoubtedly rather an expression of Christian thought and the wish of the Christians, than an oration

really delivered in the Jewish Sanhedrim. For even supposing it to be historically correct that the high council did at that time abstain from further persecution of the Christians by the advice of Gamaliel, it is still impossible that he should have appealed to the example of Theudas, who, according to Josephus, Ant. xx. 5, 1, appeared about the year 44 A.D., in the reign of Claudius, i.e. about ten years after the occurrence of the event here narrated. Neither would he have sought to dissuade them from the use of force by two examples of risings which were distinctly crushed by force. The advice of Gamaliel, from whom moreover Paul learnt only to persecute the gospel with the utmost zeal, really depicts the desire of the writer of the Book of Acts in regard to the relation of the civil power to the gospel.

36. *Before these days*: comp. note on ver. 34.

37. *The days of the taxing*: the census referred to in Luke ii. 2, taken by Quirinius, proconsul of the province of Syria, in the year 7 A.D.—*Judas of Galilee*, also known as “the Gaulonite,” from his birthplace Gamala in the trans-Jordanic district of Gaulonitis, regarded this taxing by the Roman emperor as an attack upon Jehovah, the sole Lord of Israel, and succeeded in raising a great rebellion against it, which was even favoured by a part of the Pharisees.

40. If the advice of Gamaliel commended itself to the council, the scourging is difficult to understand. The writer seems here to come into collision, in his narrative, with his own speech in the mouth of Gamaliel.

vi. 1—viii. 3.

Appointment of deacons; accusation against Stephen and his defence; persecution and the first dispersion of the community.

#### CHAPTER vi.

1. *Grecians* should be “Hellenists,” i.e. Greek-speaking Jews, and hence for the most part persons who had formerly been heathens, who had embraced Judaism and had subsequently become Christians. The *Hebrews* are Aramaic-speaking Jewish Christians.—In this account of the neglect of the Hellenists by the Hebrews, the truth of which we have no reason to doubt, we have probably the earliest trace of the opposition between Jewish and Gentile Christians which afterwards was so deep-seated and



powerful. It is, however, to a considerable extent concealed under the statements of the latter part of the account, which does not practically go into this charge, which is directed against the apostles also, of neglect of the Hellenists, the whole narrative being introduced simply on account of the appointment of deacons. Comp. notes on vii. 1 sqq., viii. 5.

3. *The Holy Ghost*: "spirit."

5. The deacons or almoners here mentioned seem from their names to have been Hellenists. Certainly Nicholas must have been, and also (on account of vv. 8 sqq.) Stephen. The Book of Acts gives us no further information about any of them except Stephen and Philip (viii. 5 sqq., xxi. 8).—About the office of deacons we have no further information either from this book or from other sources, not even in passages in which we might fairly expect to find it, e.g. xi. 30.

8. *Full of faith and power* should be "full of grace and the power of the spirit."

9. In Jerusalem there was a great number of synagogues, especially of foreign Jews. The Libertines, as their Roman name shows, were Jews who had been Roman slaves and afterwards obtained their liberty again. Their synagogue appears to have served at the same time for the Africans from Cyrene and Alexandria. Paul, who was afterwards the apostle, may have belonged at this time to the synagogue of the Cilicians, comp. xxi. 39. The fact that here, as in ix. 29, a portion of the Hellenistic Jews appear as especially zealous enemies of the gospel, does not contradict what was said in the note on vi. 1.—*Asia*: see note on ii. 9.

13. According to the contents of the speech which follows, these were not *false witnesses* from the Jewish point of view.

## CHAPTER vii.

1 sqq. The long speech which here follows turns the defence of Stephen and the gospel against the Jews into the bitterest attack upon the Israelites. This complaint culminates in the charge that the Jews always resist the holy spirit (ver. 51), the proof of this being drawn from the history of Israel, which in all ages shows alike the grace of God which is offered to men, and the ungrateful resistance of the people. Practically there is

nothing more in the speech than the condemnation of Judaism which we find throughout the book, nothing to necessitate the supposition that the writer derived it from any special source (comp. p. 266). The rejection of the temple service (vv. 47 sqq.) is easily intelligible in the mouth of our author when we consider the late date of the book, after the destruction of the temple, and it also underlies the words of xviii. 24. This speech does not really contain that freer interpretation of the law, somewhat in accordance with the ideas of the apostle Paul, which is usually looked for in it. On the contrary, it distinctly blames the Jews for not having kept the law (ver. 53). The Book of Acts has not represented Stephen as a precursor of Paul. Still, from the fact that the writer first introduces the rejection of Judaism and the temple service in the mouth of the Hellenist Stephen, we may probably infer that he had before him some tradition in which Stephen was the representative of a freer school that stood in opposition to Judaism, and that his martyr's death was the consequence of this. Comp. note on vi. 1.

2 sqq. In the time of the patriarchs the loving care of God for his people appears most clearly. By it Abraham is conducted in all his wanderings, and through it he receives the promises.—According to Gen. xii. 1 sqq., the divine command to emigrate was not given to Abraham until he dwelt in Haran [here called Charran]. The command is here, as in other ancient writers, confused with the command to depart from Ur in Chaldea which is alluded to in Gen. xv. 7 and other passages. [In Gen. xii. 1, *Now the LORD had said* should be “And the LORD said.”]

4. *When his father was dead*: This is inferred from Gen. xi. 32; but it involves an inconsistency in the chronology, since Abraham was born in his father's seventieth year, the latter lived to the age of 205, and Abraham was only 75 when he left Haran. Hence the inference is erroneous.

5. *When as yet he had no child*: These words mark distinctly how precious the divine promise was. For this reason the promises themselves (Gen. xv. 13 sq., Exod. iii. 12) are afterwards given, and in verse 8 circumcision is spoken of as the sign of the covenant of grace and of the promise.

9 sqq. The sons of Jacob also, in spite of their sins, are conducted to Joseph by the providential care of God; nevertheless



they had no place given them in the land promised to the descendants of Abraham. Their very sepulchre had been purchased.

12. *First* : "the first time."

14. *Three score and fifteen souls* : this was the number according to the Greek version of the Old Testament, which the Book of Acts follows throughout. According to the Hebrew text there were only seventy (Gen. xlv. 27 ; Exod. i. 5 ; Deut. x. 22).

16. According to Gen. xlix. 30 [and l. 13] Jacob was buried in the cave of Machpela near Hebron. Of the burial-place of his sons, with the exception of Joseph, there is no mention in the Old Testament. In the next place, Abraham did not purchase the cave from Hamor [here called Emmor], but from Ephron the Hittite (Gen. xxiii. 17 sqq.), while Jacob purchased a field from the sons of Hamor (Gen. xxxiii. 19), which, according to Joshua xxiv. 32, was the burial-place of Joseph. The Book of Acts appears to follow the later Jewish tradition here, and purposely to emphasize the despised Samaritan Sichem, in order to bring out the homelessness of the patriarchs in Canaan. —[*The father of Sychem* : The German version here reads "in Sychem," which is corrected in the commentary to "the father of Sychem." This is not, however, the reading of the best MSS., which have either "who was in Sychem," or simply "in Sychem"].

17 sqq. The history of Moses brings out the fulfilment of the promise, but also at the same time the stiff-necked opposition of the people to the messenger of God. Hence he is here represented as a forerunner and prophecy of Christ. See vv. 25, 27 sqq., 35, 39 sqq.

19. *And evil entreated our fathers so that they cast out their young children*, should be, "and tormented our fathers so that they exposed their children."

20. *Exceeding fair* : "fair before God."

21. *Cast out* should be "exposed."

22. [*Was learned* : i.e. "was taught or instructed."]—*Mighty in words* : the writer seems to have forgotten Exod. iv. 10 sqq.—The education of Moses in the wisdom of the Egyptians is not mentioned in the Old Testament.

25. *Would deliver them* : "was giving them salvation."

26. The occurrence here narrated is invested with a much

higher significance than it bears in the Old Testament. To some extent also it is altered to make it serve the purpose for which it is here intended: it is not Pharaoh, but the intractable Israelites who compel Moses to take flight, and hence a single Israelite's failure to recognize the authority of Moses is treated as his rejection by the whole people (ver. 35).—*Would have set them at one again* should be "urged them to peace."

[34. *I have seen, I have seen*: lit. "Seeing, I have seen," a Hebraism for "I have assuredly seen."]

35. *Deliverer* should be "redeemer," but it is only as a prophetic type of Christ that Moses can be called a redeemer. Comp. ver. 37.—*By the hand of the angel*: i.e. "with the help of the angel." In accordance with the later Jewish theology, especially the Alexandrian, the angel of God is introduced even in places where the Old Testament speaks distinctly of a direct revelation of Jehovah upon earth. Comp. ver. 53 and Gal. iii. 19.

38. See Exod. xix.—*The lively oracles* should be "living words," i.e. the law, with the neglect of which the Israelites are charged in ver. 53. According to Paul, on the other hand (Gal. iii. 21), the law is altogether incapable of giving life.

40. *Gods*: according to the original Hebrew, simply "a god," as indeed Aaron actually made only one image.

42. *The host of heaven*: i.e. the stars. Comp. Amos v. 25 sqq. This verse gives us, as early as the time of the ancient prophet, a different picture of the worship of Jehovah in the desert from that which we find in the Pentateuch.

43. *Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch and the star of your god Remphan*, should be "And ye bore the tent of Moloch and the constellation of your god Remphan."—*Moloch*: a Canaanite idol which was worshipped with human sacrifices. The writer follows the Greek text; the expression in the original is more general, "your king."—*Remphan*: probably Saturn.—*Babylon*: The Old Testament has "Damascus." The writer alters the passage according to his requirements.

44 sqq. In regard to the national sanctuary also God has fulfilled his promise (ver. 7). But in this also the people, and especially Solomon, resisted God by building the temple. Comp. note on vv. 1 sqq.

45. *Which also our fathers, &c.*, should be "Which also our



fathers received, and brought it with Joshua into the land when they took possession of the nations whom God thrust out," &c.—*Unto the days of David* belongs to *brought it into the land*, so that it was there until the days of David.

46. *Desired*: "asked."—That David found favour is said in order to explain his petition.—On the total rejection of the temple worship, comp. note on vv. 1 sq.—This idea is not found among Christian writers earlier than the second century.

51. Final condemnation of the Israelites. Comp. note on vv. 1 sqq.—*Uncircumcised in heart and ears*: circumcision being regarded as a rite of purification.

52. Comp. Matt. xxiii. 34 sq.—*The just one*: "the righteous one," i.e. Jesus. Here the writer passes on to the present and so brings the speech to a conclusion.

53. See note on ver. 35.

57. A judicial sentence must have been pronounced before this, as we see from the mention of the witnesses afterwards. But the description of the tumultuous proceedings before the high council throws doubt on the accuracy of the details of the whole account.

58. It was the duty of the witnesses to cast the first stones. For this purpose they took off their upper garments.—Paul is here purposely introduced. As Paul in the year 60 speaks of himself as an old man (Philem. 9), he could scarcely have been a *young man* in the year 36.

[59. *Calling upon God*: The Greek is simply "calling upon" or "invoking," without mention of any person.]

[60. The words, *And Saul was consenting unto his death*, in viii. 1, should form the conclusion of this verse.]

## CHAPTER viii.

1. *At that time there was*: "There arose at that time."—*All*: Philip at any rate (ver. 26) was still at Jerusalem, and probably others also.

2. The writer does not pursue any further the history of the spread of the gospel in Judea. He is now concerned with Samaria, which as a semi-heathen land affords the transition to the second great division of his narrative.

## viii. 4—40.

Spread of the gospel in Samaria and elsewhere.

5. *The city of Samaria*: “a city in Samaria.”—Philip is the deacon, not the apostle (comp. xxi. 8 sq.). In these operations of Philip in Samaria, which certainly went beyond the original ideas of the disciples (comp. Matt. x. 5), we may find confirmation of the supposition expressed above in the note on vi. 1, that the Hellenists were the representatives of a freer school, as opposed to the national Judaism.

6. *Hearing and seeing* should be “when they heard and saw.”

9 sqq. *But there was, &c.*, should be “But there was before-time a man, by name Simon, in the city, who practised sorcery and amazed the Samaritan people.”—The occurrence here narrated, which is connected with the name of Simon, arouses considerable suspicions. In the first place, it is not historically accurate to represent the apostles as having the sole privilege of imparting the holy spirit. There is no other statement to this effect, and it is inconsistent with other accounts in the Book of Acts itself. (Comp. viii. 26 sqq., ix. 1 sq., x. 44, xi. 22 sqq.) The assumption in ver. 18, that the holy spirit appeared in visible form, is similarly doubtful. Finally, as the whole affair leads to nothing (ver. 24), and cannot even be regarded as a miraculous punishment, the writer cannot have introduced it for its own sake. Hence we cannot decide whether the narrative has a foundation in fact, and whether this Simon is the Simon mentioned in Josephus’ *Antiquities*, xx. 7, 2. At the same time, it is the more certain that we have here a fragment of the Simon-myth which spread far and wide in various forms, and was so freely employed in the post-apostolic age, making this Simon the father of all Gnostic heresies, and especially persecuting under his name the apostle Paul, who was so hateful to the Jewish Christians. The writer of the Book of Acts, however, seems to have wished expressly to avoid this identification of the great apostle with the magian by introducing this narrative into the account of the first appearances of Paul on the scene.—[On the name magian, see note on “wise men” in Matt. ii. 1.]

10 sq. It is not clear from this whether it is meant that Simon had himself given out that he was the Messiah. The vague expression of verse 11 is best explained on the supposition



that this verse is an early instance of the later charge made by the ecclesiastical writers against the mythical Simon, of having deified himself.

11. *Bewitched* should be “amazed.”

13. How formal the writer’s conception of belief was, is evident from the fact that he himself speaks of Simon’s outward adhesion to Christianity as “belief.” This is the later ecclesiastical expression.—[*Wondered* should be “was amazed,” the word being similar to the one used in vv. 9, 11, and probably chosen by the writer on that account.]

14. The Book of Acts attempts here, as in xi. 22 sqq., to maintain a connection between the original community and the Gentile Church which was now coming into existence, but it does not adhere strictly to the historical facts in this attempt (comp note on vv. 9 sqq.).

23. This verse should read, “For I perceive that thou art fallen into bitter gall and the bond of unrighteousness.”

26 sqq. The conversion of the chamberlain from Ethiopia is a further step in the transition of the gospel to the heathen, and hence is introduced by an express divine command.—*Which is desert*: The particular road is thus pointed out because there were several ways from Jerusalem to Gaza.

27. The fact that queen Candace’s chamberlain was a eunuch is probably mentioned in order to show that he was not an Israelite by birth, although he worshipped the God of Israel. Hence he was probably one of the proselytes of the gate, as they were called. The sincere readiness with which the first heathen receives the gospel should be noticed (comp. vv. 30, 31, 36).—What is here called Ethiopia is the land of Meroe lying between the upper branches of the Nile, the warlike queens of which all bore the name and title of Candace.

32. Is. liii. 7, 8. The translation of the Hebrew is not quite exact.

33. *In his humiliation*, &c., should be “In his humiliation his sentence was annulled, but who can describe his times?”

37. This verse is an early interpolation and must be omitted.

39. The sudden disappearance of Philip and his removal to Ashdod [A. V. Azotus], about twenty miles from Gaza, on the coast of Philistia, is regarded by the writer as a sign of the won-

derful and special preparations of God for this first conversion of a Gentile. We have already seen the same thing in vv. 26, 29 (comp. note on x. 1).

ix. 1—30.

Conversion of the apostle of the Gentiles, and his first labours.

CHAPTER ix.

1 sqq. The conversion of Paul is the most important step in the transition of the gospel from the Jews to the Gentiles. It has therefore been indirectly prepared for by the whole narrative from vi. onwards, and directly by vii. 58 and viii. 3, and is purposely introduced immediately before the account of the first conversion of a thorough Gentile by an apostle. See ch. x.

2. *To the synagogues*: i.e. to the rulers of the synagogues.—*Any of this way*: i.e. any attached to the sect of the Christians. The writer assumes that there were Christians in Damascus as in Galilee (ver. 31), without having given any account of the spread of Christianity there. This shows how little he was concerned to give a mission history in the proper sense of the words.

3. The purpose of the narrative which here follows is to describe a miraculous occurrence, and consequently every attempt at a natural explanation must do violence to the text. The conversion of Paul is here founded, not upon an inner experience, but upon an external miraculous appearance. Hence every inner preparation and spiritual communication is here excluded. The following considerations, however, will show us how inexact the writer is, and how little reason we have for supposing that his account is derived from any written source. In the first place, he relates the same occurrence in three different passages (see xxii. 6 sqq., xxvi. 13 sqq.), in which both the words of Jesus and also the miraculous appearance differ essentially; so that what Jesus says to Ananias (ix. 15) is afterwards addressed by him to Paul (xxvi. 16 sq.). And in the next place, on comparing these accounts with Paul's own account in Gal. i. 15 sqq., 1 Cor. ix. 1, xv. 8 sq., we find there no mention of words spoken by Jesus, nor of any definite and miraculous effects of light and sound; while on the other hand we do find it there stated that the apostle saw the risen One, of which again there is no mention anywhere else in the book. The writer of the Book of Acts



makes use of this physical miracle in order to establish securely the reputation of the hated and persecuted apostle of the Gentiles, and divinely to attest his right to the apostolic office, and the authority of his Gentile-Christian gospel. Hence also the introduction of the second and third vision (vv. 10, 12), and the miraculous cure of his blindness (ver. 18).

5. *It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks*: These words should be omitted.

6. [*And he trembling . . . unto him*: This part of the verse should be omitted, for the same reason as the words mentioned in the note on ver. 5. They are not to be found in any known Greek MS.; the reading of the MSS. being simply, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But arise, and go into the city," &c.]—According to xxvi. 16 sqq., Jesus himself at once makes known to the apostle his future calling. Here, and in xxii. 10, he is represented as first learning it from Ananias in Damascus. Similarly ver. 7 is inconsistent with xxvi. 14 and xxii. 9.

8. *No man* should be "nothing."

10. The writer, in support of the leading idea of his book, represents the calling of Paul to be the apostle to the Gentiles as being effected through the instrumentality of a man devoted to the law (comp. vv. 12, 17, xxii. 12—15). The apostle himself, on the contrary, is conscious of the immediate and divine origin of his apostolic office and his gospel (Gal. i. 11 sqq.). We can no longer determine what historical or traditional foundation there may have been for the account we find given here.

11. The Straight Street is the well-known main street of Damascus.

12. Paul's sufferings also testify to his apostolic right, and are therefore almost always announced to him directly by God (xvi. 9, xviii. 9, xx. 23, 25, xxi. 11, xxii. 18, xxiii. 11).

20 sq. Here, and in what afterwards follows, the description given of Paul's first labours and his relation to the primitive community and the apostles at Jerusalem is essentially contradictory to his own account (Gal. i. 15—24). According to Gal. i. 16, Paul can never have made his appearance as an apostle among the Jews. Here he appears as such at once in Damascus and Jerusalem, vv. 20—27. According to Gal. i. 17 sq., Paul retired first of all to Arabia, and allowed three years to pass

before going up for the first time to Jerusalem. Here there is no mention of this. Finally, in Gal. i. 17 sqq., the apostle distinctly and emphatically states that his gospel and apostolic office are independent of the first apostles. Here this independence is thrown into the shade, and a very intimate connection with the first apostles is affirmed, vv. 27, 28.

20. There is no room here, nor in ver. 23, nor between 25 and 26, for the residence in Arabia of Gal. i. 17 sq.

22. *Very Christ*: "the Christ."

24 sq. This account is confirmed by the apostle's own narrative in 2 Cor. xi. 32 sq., except that there it was not the Jews, but the ethnarch of king Aretas who endeavoured to apprehend Paul.

25. *By the wall*: "through the wall."

27. By the mention of *the apostles* generally cannot be intended only Peter and James the brother of Christ, as in Gal. i. 18.—On the position of Barnabas as a mediator, comp. note on iv. 36. Paul does not mention him at all in connection with his first visit to Jerusalem (Gal. i. 18), but only afterwards, and then simply as a companion of his own way of thinking. (Gal. ii. 1, 11—13.)

29. According to xxvi. 20, Paul preached Christ throughout all Judea. Comp. note on ver. 20.—*Grecians* should be "Hellenists." Stephen had already contended with the Jewish Hellenists (vi. 9 sqq.).—According to xxii. 17 sqq., there was a different reason for Paul's departure, and it took place in consequence of a vision. Comp. note on the passage.

ix. 31—xxviii. 31.

Second of the two great divisions of the Book of Acts. The spread of the gospel in the heathen world.

ix. 31—xi. 18.

Consecration and defence of the mission to the Gentiles by Peter.

31. In the words of this verse we have the formal conclusion of the first part of the book, and at the same time an introduction to the second part.—*The churches . . . . were edified . . . . were multiplied*, should be "the church . . . . was edified . . . . was multiplied."

32. *Lydda* is the ancient Lod, afterwards called Diospolis, on the Philistine coast.



35. *Saron* is the Philistine plain between Joppa and Cæsarea.

36. *Dorcas*: i.e. gazelle.

37. The miracle is formally prepared for by the laying of the body in the upper chamber, as if it was expected.

38. *Desiring him*, &c., should be "entreating; delay not to come to us."

39. *Which Dorcas made*, &c., should be "which Dorcas has made as long as she was with them."

43. The occupation of tanning was regarded by the Israelites as unclean (comp. x. 6). Hence Peter's residence with Simon is probably only mentioned in order that the writer, in setting forth the beginning of the mission beyond Jerusalem, may also set forth the beginning of the emancipation from the Mosaic law which is established in what follows.

#### CHAPTER X.

1. The account given in this chapter of the conversion of Gentiles by Peter arouses the most serious suspicions as to its genuineness. According to xi. 18, it finally settles the question as to the reception of the Gentiles into Christianity without requiring the observance of the law, on the ground of an express command of God, for which solemn preparation has been made; whereas both the Book of Acts itself (xv. 1 sqq.) and the Epistle to the Galatians, especially the latter, show us that at the time here referred to the question was by no means settled, and that Peter, above all, cannot then have received a direct divine command concerning it. On the other hand, it is entirely in keeping with the general view taken by the writer of the Book of Acts, that when he passes on to the mission to the Gentiles the main question should be decided by God himself in a solemn and miraculous manner, and that the person for whom this decision is made should be not Paul but Peter. The Pauline preaching to the Gentiles, which was so strongly opposed, is thus removed to the primitive community, and all the edge is taken off the opposition between the Pauline and the primitive Christian gospels. It is no longer possible to determine on what historical fact or tradition this narrative rested.—*The Italian band* is a Roman cohort of Italians, not of natives.

2. It must remain uncertain whether by the expression here

used Cornelius is intended to be described as a proselyte of the gate, like the eunuch of viii. 27, or whether he is to be regarded as occupying a position of perfect freedom in reference to Judaism. In either case his conversion depicts the reception into Christianity of one formerly a heathen (vv. 28, 34 sqq., xi. 1 sqq., 18, xv. 7), and the greatest stress is here laid upon the readiness of the Gentile to receive the gospel (vv. 4, 22, 25, 30, &c.).

[3. *Evidently*, i.e. plainly.]

6. *He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do*: a later addition.

11 sqq. By this vision, the Old Testament distinction between clean and unclean meats is abolished, and thereby the first hindrance of intercourse with the Gentiles and their reception into Christianity is removed.

12. *All manner of four-footed beasts of the earth and wild beasts and creeping things*, should be "all four-footed and creeping beasts of the earth."

[22. *Was warned from God*: more strictly, "received an oracle," or "received a divine command."]

28. *How that it is an unlawful thing*, &c., should be "how unlawful it is for a Jew to attach himself to a foreigner or to visit him."—The prohibition here stated goes beyond the Jewish law and the custom of the Jews. The separation between the Jews and the Gentiles is here probably exaggerated, in order to make the abolition of it in Christianity the more marked.

30. *Four days*: the time which had actually elapsed since the vision (comp. vv. 8, 9, 23 sq.).

34 sqq. The purpose of this speech is set forth in the two first verses and in the conclusion, ver. 43, namely, to declare the principle of the abolition of the national and religious distinction between Jews and Gentiles in Christianity, which, instead of descent from Abraham and circumcision, requires only piety of heart. Still there is no declaration of the abolition of the observance of the law for those who were formerly Jews, either here or in chapter xv. On the contrary, it is assumed that they are under an obligation to observe it.—Except for this, the speech only contains just the same that we have found everywhere else in the Book of Acts.

36, 37. These two verses should read, "Ye know the word which he sent to the children of Israel, causing peace to be



preached through Jesus Christ (he is a Lord over all). Ye know the things that have taken place throughout all Judea, having begun from Galilee after the baptism which John preached." The sentence is here interrupted by the leading thought that Jesus is Lord over all (hence also over the Gentiles), and then taken up again with the words, "Ye know," &c., in ver. 37.

38. On this view of Christ, see pp. 262 sq.

41. See note on i. 3.

42. According to i. 8 and Luke xxiv. 47, Jesus himself at the same time gave the command to preach to the Gentiles. The reason that Peter makes no mention of this, which would have been of such importance to him, is that the whole of the present narrative assumes that such a command could not have been given at that time.

43. *Whosoever believeth in him*: i.e. whether Jew or Gentile.

44. The miraculous descent of the spirit before the baptism is intended to make Peter still more certain that God wills the unconditional acceptance of the Gentiles. The mention of speaking with tongues (46) serves the same purpose, that being the surest proof of the presence of the spirit (comp. note on ii. 4).

47. *Water*; "the water."

## CHAPTER xi.

3. Eating with the Gentiles, according to xv. 20, 29; 1 Cor. viii.—x.; Gal. ii. 12, as well as this passage, was the very point which was practically raised in connection with the question of their acceptance (comp. note on x. 11 sqq.).

4. Here the preaching to the Gentiles rests only upon express command and a concurrence of various miracles. What a very different ground is taken by Paul, Rom. ix.—xi.

12. More stress is laid upon the presence of these companions here than in x. 23, because, as witnesses actually present, they give efficient security for the accuracy of his statements.

13. *An angel* should be "the angel."

xi. 19—xii. 25.

The founding of the Gentile-Christian church in Antioch. Miraculous deliverance of Peter.

19. After all these preparations the writer really tells us of the origin of a Gentile-Christian community in Antioch, but he

gives no hint whether or in what manner this is connected with the divine direction to Peter, the history of which he has just related. The absolute freedom of the Gentile Christians from the law cannot in any case have been recognized there, inasmuch as Paul alone was the independent pioneer in this.—*Antioch*: the well-known imperial city on the river Orontes, in which there was the most extensive and thorough intercourse between the eastern and western nations.

22. On the position of Barnabas as a mediator, compare notes on iv. 36, ix. 27.

26. *And it came to pass*, &c., should be "But it came to pass that they were connected in the church for a whole year, and taught much people, and that in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians."—The origin of the name *Christian*, which in any case is of Latin form and must have been invented by the Gentiles, is closely connected, in the opinion of our author, with the separation of the Christians from the synagogue and their appearance as an independent community. There are additional difficulties connected with the appearance of a name of Latin formation in the Greek city of Antioch.

27 sqq. The Book of Acts emphasizes the fact that the Gentile church which has just been founded remains in the closest connection with the mother church at Jerusalem. The immediate occasion of this was the famine which raged in Palestine and the surrounding countries in the reign of Claudius. The writer converts this into a universal famine extending over the whole world (comp. Josephus, xx. 2, 5). In consequence of a prophecy concerning it, Barnabas and Saul are sent to convey support to the communities in Judea. This journey of Saul, however, is unhistorical, for in Gal. i. ii., where he tells us of his first visit (Acts ix. 26 sqq.) and of his second (Acts xv. 2 sqq.), he could never have omitted to mention a third, if such had taken place, between these two. The writer seems to have introduced this narrative on the strength of some tradition corresponding with Paul's last journey to Jerusalem which was connected with the bringing of a collection (1 Cor. xvi. 1—4), and to have derived his details from what was otherwise known about Paul. His great object was to represent the relation between Paul and the primitive community as being throughout an undisturbed relation of dependence.



## CHAPTER xii.

1. Before the gospel turns entirely to the Gentiles, the writer gives one more striking example of the unwillingness of the Israelites to receive it. Prince and people unite to prepare a persecution of the Christian community, to which an apostle falls a victim, and from which the chief apostle Peter is only rescued by a miracle. The writer dwells with delight upon the miraculous deliverance of Peter, thus taking leave as it were of the hero of the first part of his work, before turning his attention entirely to Paul.—*Herod*, surnamed Agrippa I., was the cunning but vacillating grandson of Herod the Great.\* After the varied fortunes of his earlier life, he was made king of the tetrarchy of Philip, together with the territory of Lysanias, by his friend the emperor Caius Caligula, on his accession in the year 37 A.D. He afterwards received in addition the territory of Antipas, and finally Judea and Samaria were added by the emperor Claudius. What is here narrated about him agrees with what we learn elsewhere of his attempt at an appearance of Jewish piety, and popularity with the Pharisee-ridden people, especially after the bitter oppression of the Jews by Caligula.

2. James the elder, the son of Zebedee, must be distinguished from James the younger, the son of Alphæus (i. 13), and also from the brother of the Lord (xii. 17, xv. 13, xxi. 18).

4. *Four quaternions*: i.e. four companies of four soldiers each.

7. *The angel* should be "an angel."—*Prison*: "chamber."

9. This verse expresses the marvellous and mysterious impression that is made upon Peter by his liberation. It is no longer possible to come to any decision as to the historical value of the narrative, as we have no other sources of information.

12. *And when he had considered the thing*, should be "And when he had become aware of it."

15. *His angel*: i.e. his guardian angel who had appeared instead of him or in his interest. The idea of the existence of personal guardian angels is found also in the words of Jesus in Matt. xviii. 10.

17. Peter's commission and the place to which he went are left entirely undefined, and as the writer here takes leave altogether of the history of Peter, we can only suppose that he found

the further accounts of his career of no avail for his purpose. He deals in the same way with Paul (comp. note on xxviii. 31).

19. *That they should be put to death*: lit. "that they should be led away," i.e. led away to execution.

20 sqq. The Book of Acts represents the solemn reception of the Phœnician embassy as the occasion of the occurrence here narrated. Josephus, on the other hand (Ant. xix. 8, 2), lays the scene in the theatre, where Herod was giving gladiatorial shows in honour of the emperor Claudius, and where the magnificence of his silver-broidered garments gleaming in the morning sun caused him to be saluted as a god. Soon after, Josephus tells us, Herod saw the owl which it had been foretold should be the messenger of death to him, was seized by a violent pain in the bowels and died after five days.—In the Book of Acts this whole story has no meaning, unless the writer regards the sudden and terrible death of Herod as a retribution for his crime against the Christians.

25. *Fulfilled their ministry*: i.e. delivered up the collection that had been made.

#### xiii. xiv.

Paul's first missionary journey through Cyprus and Asia Minor.

### CHAPTER xiii.

1. All three of the apostle's journeys of which accounts are given in the Book of Acts, start from Antioch and end with a visit to Jerusalem. In the second and third narratives we find clear indications of their having been derived from some written source. In the first, however, this is not the case. Moreover, in the letters of the apostle himself we find no definite information about this first journey. Hence it is no longer possible for us to determine how far its descriptions are authentic. According to Gal. i. 21, ii. 1, the apostle remained for fourteen years in the regions of Syria and Cilicia. The Book of Acts therefore gives us in any case only a very small part of his labours during this long period. The writer must, however, have had at command some written sources or other for his account of the first journey.—*Which had been brought up with Herod*: i.e. his foster-brother.—Paul's independence in his apostolic labours, which as a matter of fact was so distinct and marked, is thrown as much as possible



into the shade in the Book of Acts, and perhaps that is the reason why he is here introduced last among the prophets and teachers. For the same reason he is represented as undertaking his journey only at the express command of God (ver. 2), and not then independently and of himself, but by commission of the community (ver. 3).

4. *Seleucia* is at the mouth of the river Orontes, on which Antioch itself stands.—According to iv. 36, Barnabas was a native of Cyprus. It was a senatorial province, and consequently received a new proconsul annually from the senate.

5. *John* is the John Mark of xii. 12.—[*To their minister*: i.e. as their attendant or servant.]

[6, 8. *Sorcerer* should be “magian.” Comp. viii. 9, and see note on Matt. ii. 1.]

[7, 8, 12. *Deputy* should be “proconsul.”]

6. *Paphos* was equally famous for its oracle of Venus and notorious for the disorders connected with the prophecy sorcery and so forth that was practised there.

8. *Elymas*: i.e. “the sage,” an Arabic designation which the magian had probably given to himself.

9. From this narrative onwards, the Book of Acts always employs the name of Paul for Saul. It is probable that the apostle, in accordance with a custom of the Jews of frequent occurrence, had used both names side by side before his conversion, the one in his intercourse with Jews and the other with Gentiles. In any case the change which is made here is connected with the beginning of his mission to the Gentiles.

10 sqq. The writer here relates a victory on the part of Paul over a magian, entirely similar to that of Peter in viii. 18 sqq., and thus places the two upon the same footing of apostolic authority. In addition to this, however, he brings forward as prominently as possible at the very beginning of Paul’s mission, the contrast between the readiness of the Gentile official to receive the truth of the gospel, and the hostility which the Jewish magian manifests towards it (comp. vv. 6 sqq., 12).—We can scarcely decide what may be the historical germ of this narrative.

13. *Perga*: the capital of Pamphylia, on the river Cestrus.—The name of Barnabas, which has hitherto been placed before that of the apostle, is henceforth always placed second, except

in some special cases to which attention will be called (comp. ix. 27, xi. 25, xv. 25).—The ground on which John Mark here departed from Paul was probably an essential difference between their views as to the relation between Gentiles and Jews in Christianity (comp. xv. 38). The Book of Acts purposely passes rapidly over this dispute.

14. *Antioch in Pisidia* had been raised by Augustus to the rank of a Roman colony.

15. *Ye men and brethren* should be "Brethren."—This speech of Paul's, which is regarded by the writer as the central point of the first journey (just as the speech at Athens to the Gentiles (xvii. 22—31) is regarded as the central point of the second journey, and the address to the Christians at Miletus (xx. 18—35) of the third), is represented as a discourse in the synagogue addressed only to Jews. Its contents correspond in a striking manner with the speech of Stephen, and with the peculiar views of the writer which find expression elsewhere. Comp.; for example, vv. 17—22 with chap. vii., vv. 24—31 with x. 37 sqq., ver. 25 with Luke iii. 15 sq., ver. 31 with i. 3. The speech points out emphatically the blessings shown by God to the people of Israel in its history down to the time of Jesus (vv. 17—22) and through Jesus (23—31), which were rejected by Israel. Then follows an urgent exhortation to accept the gospel under a threat of divine judgment (vv. 32—41).

16. *Ye that fear God*: these are the proselytes of the gate.

18. *Suffered he their manners* should be "he nourished and cherished them.

20. The Book of Acts here adopts the chronology of Josephus (*Antiquities*, viii. 3, 1), departing from that of 1 Kings vi. 1, where the whole period from the exodus out of Egypt to the fourth year of Solomon is reckoned at 480 years.

22. *I have found, &c.*: loosely quoted from Ps. lxxxix. 20 and 1 Sam. xiii. 14.

25. *Fulfilled*: "was fulfilling."

26. The thought here expressed recurs in almost every speech in the Book of Acts. The word *for* in ver. 27 is introduced to establish the original destination of the gospel for Israel upon the thought that, in spite of the rejection of Jesus personally by Jews, which might be pardoned in case of their subsequent con-



version, it must still be preached to them first. Comp. iii. 17 sqq.

27. *Because they knew him not . . . fulfilled them* should be “failed to recognize him, and fulfilled the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath-day.”

29. The burial of Jesus was the work of his friends, but the Book of Acts is here concerned only with the fulfilment of the prophecy; and hence it is taken as part and parcel of the crucifixion.

31. Comp. notes on i. 3, x. 41.

33. *Again* should be omitted.—*In the second psalm* should be “in the first psalm.” Our first psalm was often reckoned as an introduction to the whole collection, and then the enumeration began with Psalm ii.—The passage quoted here (Ps. ii. 7) is applied to the baptism, and only what follows to the resurrection.

34. Is. lv. 3.—On the inexact quoting of the Old Testament, see note on vii. 14.

35. Ps. xvi. 10.—There is a striking resemblance between this and ii. 27. Comp. note on ii. 25.

36. *After he had served his own generation, &c.*: “after he had served the will of God in his own time.”

38. *Men and brethren* should be “brethren.”

38, 39. This is the only passage in the Book of Acts in which the central point of Paul’s gospel appears, viz. the doctrine of justification by faith. And even here the words, *justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses*, express only a partial justification by faith, supplementing the righteousness which is of the law. And, again, this faith is not referred here (as it always is in Paul’s writings) to the death of Jesus.

40. Hab. i. 5. See note on vii. 14.

42. This verse should read, “And as they were going out, they begged that these words might be preached to them again the next Sabbath.”

43. *Persuaded*: “exhorted.”

46. *Waxed bold*: “spoke out plainly.”—According to the statement of this verse it was the rejection of the gospel by the Jews that first justified Paul’s mission to the Gentiles (comp. xvii. 1 sq., xviii. 6, xxviii. 26 sqq.). This is consistent with the

leading idea of the Book of Acts (see pp. 260 sq.), but it is just as inconsistent with the apostle's principles as expressed in his letters, according to which he was conscious from the first of being called to be an apostle to the Gentiles (Gal. i. 16, ii. 7 sq.), and could never have connected the free proclamation of the gospel to all the world, to which he felt himself bound, with the accidental circumstance of Jewish opposition (Rom. i. 14; Gal. iii. 28).

47. *Isaiah xlix. 6 sq.*

[48. *Ordained*: i.e. appointed.]

50. *Devout and honourable women*: i.e. proselytes to Judaism.

51. Comp. Matt. x. 14.—*Iconium* was the chief city of Lycaonia.

52. *The disciples*: i.e. in Antioch.

#### CHAPTER xiv.

1. *The Greeks* here are Greeks well disposed to the Jews. Comp. xiii. 16, 26, 43.

6. *Lystra and Derbe*: both south-east of Iconium.

8 sqq. The healing of a lame man here effected by Paul corresponds in a remarkable manner with that effected by Peter (iii. 2 sqq.), almost to the very expressions used (comp. note on iii. 6 sqq.).

11 sqq. While the Jews rejected the message of the apostles, the Gentiles received them as gods (comp. xxviii. 6). We can scarcely believe that such a deification of men could actually take place at that time, though it is not altogether impossible. In the connection in which it appears in the Book of Acts, however, it serves to bring vividly before the reader the extraordinary impression made by the act and person of Paul, and the religious receptivity of the Gentiles, and at the same time affords an occasion for the confession of the One God by Paul (vv. 15 sqq.). Comp. Rom. i. 19 sqq.; Acts xvii. 22 sqq.

12. *Because he was the chief speaker*: This remark is intended to prevent the reader from supposing that Barnabas, who since xiii. 13 retires behind Paul, had made the most powerful impression of the two.

[13. *Jupiter which was before their city*: i.e. "Jupiter whose temple was before the city gates."]

14. *Ran in*: "leapt out."



[15. *Of like passions*: lit. suffering, or subject to, the same things, i.e. "of like nature."]

16. Comp. note on xvii. 24.

17. *Us . . . our* should be "you . . . your."

19. This is probably the stoning referred to by Paul in 2 Cor. xi. 25.

23. Election by the community is here excluded. According to the view taken in the Pauline Epistles, the choice of such officers did not rest upon any official authority of the apostles, but upon free self-determination, according to the gifts and capabilities of the individual (1 Cor. xvi. 15 sq., xii. 28).

25. *Attalia*: on the coast of Pamphylia.

27. The result of the first journey, which according to the view of the Book of Acts must receive confirmation from Jerusalem.

xv. 1—34.

The final determination of the relation between Jews and Gentiles in the church.

#### CHAPTER XV.

1 sqq. Occupying a significant position in the middle of the book, we here find the account of a solemn arrangement between the Gentile mission of Paul which was free from the law, and the Jewish-Christian school under the law, the representatives of which were found at Jerusalem, and a final confirmation of the apostolic labours of Paul by the assembled college of the first apostles and witnesses to the gospel, under distinct conditions imposed upon the Gentile-Christian communities. The fact which lies at the foundation of this narrative is the journey of Paul to Jerusalem, which he undertook with the object of coming to some arrangement, concerning his gospel, with those "who were of reputation" (Gal. ii. 1 sqq.). From the unquestionable account given by Paul in his Epistle, it is evident that our writer had here historical materials, but has altered them essentially in favour of his own views, and thus come into collision with the undoubted evidences of the apostolic age. Thus, according to Gal. ii. 2, Paul went up to Jerusalem in consequence of a spontaneous impulse of his own; while according to Acts xv. 2 sqq. he is commissioned by the church at Antioch. According to Gal. ii. 6 sqq., 11 sqq., he had to endure a serious

contest with the apostles in Jerusalem ; while in the Book of Acts no opposition appears between him and them, Peter and James speaking most zealously on behalf of Paul, and Paul himself merely narrating the results of his mission to the Gentiles (xv. 7—21). Again, according to Gal. ii. 5 sqq., Paul carries his gospel, which is free from the law, in opposition to the twelve, only undertaking a duty to the mother community in Jerusalem which is not inconsistent with it, and the mission field is divided between him and the twelve, so that he is henceforth to be regarded as an apostle to the Gentiles, and they as apostles to the Jews, not united with him therefore in his work ; while on the contrary the Paul of the Book of Acts suffers a portion of the Mosaic law to be imposed upon him as obligatory on the communities under his charge, and himself submits to it (xv. 20) ; indeed he even obtains a formal letter of recommendation from the twelve (vv. 23 sqq.). On the other hand, the obligation to assist the mother church (Gal. ii. 10) is not even mentioned, and there is not a word about the division of the mission field, for the simple reason that here (x.) Peter has already appeared as an apostle to the Gentiles, and Paul appears throughout as an apostle to the Jews. Further, the contest as to the circumcision of Titus, upon which, according to Gal. ii. 3 sqq., Paul lays the chief stress, is only referred to in very general terms in Acts. xv. 5 sqq. Finally, moreover, while the account given in Gal. ii. 11 sqq. of the renewal of the contest between Paul and Peter at Antioch shows that there must have been some previous approach on the part of Peter to the views of Paul, it also shows equally plainly that this was by no means the case on the part of James, and that even Peter can never have taken up the position attributed to him by the Book of Acts in the passage now under consideration. If he had done so, Paul must of necessity have appealed to the fact in Gal. ii. 14 sqq. If it is improbable that the whole account before us is due purely to the writer's imagination, we can only suppose that, in addition to the Pauline Epistles, he made use of later and altered traditions, and worked them up with his historical materials into a narrative having the object of concealing as far as possible the opposition between the Pauline and the legal gospel, which in his own times had ceased to exist, or appeared only in an altered form and was confined to a smaller sphere, and



also of representing the position of the church of his own day as the original position taken up by the apostles and recognized by them all without opposition. See p. 261.

4. The solemn reception marks the importance of the occasion and the business before them.

5. The question whether the Gentile Christians were under an obligation to adopt circumcision was the chief point in dispute in the apostolic times, and according to Gal. ii. 3 in this very discussion. The Book of Acts, however, never returns to it again at all, only touching upon it here and in verse 1, and the demand here expressed, in which, according to Gal. ii. 3, 6, the apostles also agreed, is here confined to a small circle of zealots.

7. *And when there had been much disputing* should be "But when a great dispute arose."—*A good while ago*: about fourteen years. The writer desires to bring forward as prominently as possible the original and undoubted destination of the gospel for the Gentiles.

8. Comp. x. 44 sqq., xi. 15 sqq.

10, 11. [*To put*: i.e. by putting].—Here Peter expresses the freedom of the Gentile Christians from the law more strongly than it is expressed anywhere else in the Book of Acts. He even relieves those who were formerly Jews from the servitude of the law, which everywhere else, even in the speech of James which follows (vv. 19 sqq.), they are assumed to be under. Comp. xviii. 18, xxi. 26.

12. According to 1 Cor. i. 22, it was distinctly not upon signs and wonders, but upon the necessity of his own inner consciousness, that Paul based his gospel.

14. *Did visit the Gentiles, &c.*, should be "determined to take out from the Gentiles a people for his name."

16. Amos ix. 11, quoted with some freedom from the Greek version.

17, 18. *Who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world*, should be "who doeth all this, which is known from old time."—The words "which is known from old time" are an addition of the speaker for the purpose of marking the prophecy.

19. *My sentence* should be "my opinion."—*Are turned*: "turn."—When we consider how frequently and how distinctly the

apostle Paul expresses his principle of the justification of man by faith alone (Gal. ii. 18 sq., 1 Cor. i. 23), it is impossible to suppose that he ever accepted the four provisions of the law which are here resolved upon, and according to ver. 22 approved by the whole assembly and prescribed to the Gentile-Christian communities. On the other hand, they are not the invention of the writer of the Book of Acts, but their validity and recognition in the post-apostolic, and to some extent in the apostolic age may be proved (for example, from Rev. ii. 14, 20). Still in the apostolic age they can only have been valid in communities which were not under the exclusive influence of Paul. They represent the smallest amount of legal conditions which, from the legal standpoint, could be demanded from those who were formerly Gentiles, being such as were demanded by Judaism from those who were known as the proselytes of the gate. The writer has removed to the apostolic age, and founded upon the decree here given, those conditions which in his own time were universally accepted, and by means of which the association in Christianity of those who had formerly been Jews and those who had formerly been Gentiles had been rendered possible. Possibly in so doing he only followed a tradition which already lay before him. As time went on, the provisions which, according to xvi. 4, xxi. 25, were determined upon for ever, fell out of use in the Latin churches.

20. *From pollutions of idols*: i.e. from taking part in Gentile sacrificial feasts, and eating the flesh from idolatrous sacrifices which was sold in the markets. Even the latter was regarded, according to 1 Cor. viii.—x., Rev. ii. 14, 20, and other evidence, by those who had formerly been Jews as most scandalous. Paul's opinion is different.—*Fornication*: i.e. not simply every kind of unchastity, the prohibition of which in Christianity is understood, but also marriage within those degrees of relationship within which it was allowed by the Gentiles but forbidden in the Old Testament, and also forbidden forms of marriage and other forbidden lusts.—*Things strangled*: flesh of animals from which the blood had not been taken, for, according to the Old Testament view, the soul dwells in the blood (Lev. xvii. 13, 14). Hence the consumption of the blood of beasts at Gentile sacrificial feasts and on other occasions was an abomination to the Israelites.



21. This universal spread of Judaism with its ancient laws which were thus universally known among the Gentiles, is intended to justify the demands made upon them in regard to the law in ver. 20.

22. *Silas* is short for *Silvanus*. The person here spoken of is the *Silas* who afterwards appears so frequently in the Book of Acts, and is also mentioned in 2 Cor. i. 19, 1 Thess. i. 1.

23. *Syria and Cilicia*: From this it is evident that the dispute must have extended over a larger area than we might have supposed from what is said in xv. 1.

24. *Have troubled you, &c.*, should be "have troubled you with words, disturbing your souls, to whom we gave no commandment." The intervening words are an interpolation.

25, 26. Barnabas here, as in ver. 12, is placed before Paul in consequence of the part he plays as a mediator. Comp. note on xiii. 13. The recommendation and justification of Paul contained in these verses [where the *men that have hazarded their lives* are Barnabas and Paul, not the "chosen men" of the preceding verse] can only be intended to conceal as far as possible the deep gulf which in the apostolic times separated him from the Jewish Christians. It cannot be reconciled with Gal. ii. 6.

27. Judas and Silas, as two new-comers enjoying the full confidence of the apostles, confirm the testimony in favour of Paul and Barnabas by which their proceedings are justified.

34. This verse should be omitted.

#### xv. 35—xviii. 22.

Paul's second journey. Introduction of the gospel into Europe.

35. *Paul also*: "But Paul."

36. See note on xiii. 1.

37. [*Determined* should be "wished"].—According to the account here given of this dispute, it was merely a personal matter, not a question of principle. Probably, however, we ought to infer the very opposite from xiii. 13 (comp. note on that passage). More important, however, is the fact that, instead of being directed to the second dispute between Peter and Paul at Antioch, described in Gal. ii. 11 sqq., which ought properly to have been introduced here, the attention of the reader is called to a different matter, and, according to the representation here given, a matter of no importance in connection with this dispute.

39. *And the contention was so sharp between them, that:* lit. "And there arose exasperation, so that."

#### CHAPTER xvi.

2 sq. According to Gal. ii. 3 sqq., Paul distinctly refused to circumcise another companion, Titus, at the demand of the community in Jerusalem; and according to Gal. ii. 18, v. 2 sqq., though he considered circumcision as in itself a matter of indifference, he declares that the voluntary submission to the rite on the part of a Christian is equivalent to a renunciation of the freedom won through Christ, and of salvation. According to this, there could be no reasons which should induce him to act in contradiction to this principle and so to the very foundation of his gospel in the case now before us. Regard for the Jews, especially, explains nothing, as Paul distinctly refuses to be influenced by it on other occasions, and such consideration for them as would compel him to renounce his gospel is quite inconsistent with his character. Hence this statement that he circumcised Timothy can only rest on some erroneous account which the writer of the Book of Acts has introduced (perhaps on the authority of some later tradition, but inconsistent with the resolution of xv. 24 sqq.) in order to show, in opposition to the well-known case of Titus, Gal. ii. 3 sqq., the apostle's readiness to accommodate himself to the requirements of the law. The events narrated in xviii. 18, xxi. 26, must be regarded in the same way.

4. See note on xv. 19 sqq.

6. *And were forbidden* should be "having been forbidden."—In this and the following verses the writer passes quickly over the labours of Paul in Asia Minor, partly in order that he may the sooner reach the most important point in the second journey, viz. the passage into Europe, and partly that he may avoid the important foundation of the Galatian communities with which were connected those contests between Paul and the original community at Jerusalem which were most inconsistent with the writer's own views.—*Asia*: see note on ii. 9.—*Galatia*: The preceding verses, 1—6, show us that this does not mean the Roman province of Galatia, which included Pisidia and parts of Pamphylia and Lycaonia, from which Paul had just come, but the district of Galatia on the two sides of the river Halys. In



this district Paul now preached his gospel, and to the communities established here, not to those of the whole province including those which he had founded on his first journey, he addressed his Epistle to the Galatians while on his third journey, in order to keep them from falling away to the Jewish-Christian gospel under the law. Comp. note on xviii. 23. The Book of Acts, by means of the double indication given to Paul by the Holy Spirit (vv. 6, 7), directs our attention to the passage into Europe (vv. 9 sqq.). The historical germ of this story of the Holy Spirit directing that the gospel was not to be preached here, appears to have been a severe attack of physical suffering under which the apostle at that time laboured. Comp. Gal. iv. 13.

7. *The Spirit* should be "the spirit of Jesus."

8. *Troas*: a city on the shore of the Hellespont.

10. The change to the first person, "we endeavoured," &c., is not due to the arrival of a new travelling companion, but to the reasons given on pp. 264 sqq. The writer of the Book of Acts, who must be clearly distinguished from the writer of the journal itself, purposely introduces at this most important point of his narrative the very words of his authority.

11. *Samothracia*: an island in the Ægean Sea.—*Neapolis*: a sea-port in Thrace.

12. *Philippi*: In the most important city of Macedonia, Paul founded the first Christian community in Europe. The extant Epistle to the Philippians, written during his imprisonment in Rome, gives pleasing testimony to their faithful adherence to him.—*The chief city of that part of Macedonia* should be "the most important city in the province."

16. *A spirit of divination*: What is meant is a miraculous possession by an evil spirit which prophesied from her in the voice of a ventriloquist.

18. *Being grieved* should be "being annoyed."

19. Here the writer ceases to employ the words of his authority, and probably at the same time departs from the more exact account itself.

20. *The magistrates* are the two chief magistrates of a Roman colony. It has already been stated in ver. 12 that Philippi was such a colony.

26. Any attempt at a natural explanation of this story would

only show a want of appreciation of the story and of respect for the text. The writer intends to give an account of a miracle, and he also evidently connects it with the prayer in ver. 25. The narrative has a remarkable resemblance to that of the deliverance of the apostles in Jerusalem, v. 18 sqq. In each case the release from prison is not the direct aim of the miracle, which is rather to give a miraculous proof of the divine power and of the divine pleasure in the apostles. It is for this reason that Paul and Silas do not appeal to their Roman citizenship before this occurrence (ver. 22), but only after it; otherwise the miracle could not have been introduced. According to 1 Thess. ii. 2 (comp. 2 Cor. xi. 25), Paul suffered severe ill-treatment in Philippi, but he says nothing about any miraculous divine testimony on his behalf, and as we have no sign here of any account from an eye-witness, it is impossible any longer to determine what fact may have lain at the foundation of our narrative.

34. *Meat*: lit. "a table."—*And rejoiced, &c.*: "And rejoiced with all his house that he had come to believe in God."

35. The absence of any sufficient ground for this change of purpose on the part of the magistrates makes the whole account most confused.

37. The Valerian law gave to Roman citizens the privilege of total exemption from scourging. Paul's Roman citizenship is only known from the Book of Acts, that of Silas only from this single passage.—We can only explain the silence of Paul and Silas, when scourged, on the grounds stated in the note on ver. 26. And only by the attempt of the Book of Acts to recommend the gospel to the civil authorities can we explain their demand for satisfaction at the hands of the magistrates, and the conduct of the latter in vv. 38 sq., when as a matter of fact they were quite innocent.

#### CHAPTER xvii.

1. *Amphipolis and Apollonia*: important cities in Macedonia. *Thessalonica*: a flourishing and wealthy commercial city at the head of the Thermaic gulf, having a large number of Jewish inhabitants, and the seat of a Roman prætor. Here Paul founded a large community, to which he wrote from Corinth the Epistle known as the First Epistle to the Thessalonians (comp. note on xviii. 11).



2. See note on xiii. 46.

3. *Christ must needs have suffered and risen*: "it behoved Christ to suffer and rise."

4. *Believed*: "took part with him" [strictly "were persuaded"]. The narrative which follows here serves again to set forth the contrast between the readiness of the Gentiles to receive the gospel, and the obstinate resistance of the Jews (comp. note on xiii. 10 sq.). At the same time it contains a political justification of the gospel against the Jewish libel that it was dangerous to the state (vv. 6 sq.; comp. note on xviii. 13).

5. This verse should read, "But the Jews were zealous, and collected certain evil men from the rabble and raised a mob," &c.

9. *Security*: evidently only for the political innocence of the apostles which is thereby established.

10. *Berea*: situated in another part of Macedonia east of Thessalonica.

11. *More noble than those in Thessalonica*: To this more favourable opinion of the Jews is immediately opposed reprehensible conduct on their part in ver. 13.

12. *Honourable women*: see note on xiii. 50.

14. *As it were to*: "as far as."

15. According to 1 Thess. iii. 1 sq., Timothy, in accordance with this command, met the apostle in Athens, and from there was sent by him back to Thessalonica; while, according to Acts xviii. 5, he did not meet him until he reached Corinth.

17. Even in the thoroughly pagan city of Athens Paul first visits the synagogue. Comp. note on xiii. 46.

19. *Areopagus*: It is probably of distinct purpose that the writer describes the Apostle to the Gentiles as brought before this supreme court of Greece, that he may thereby afford him a suitable theatre for the delivery of the great defence of Christianity against heathenism which he here puts in his mouth. According to his representation, this address to the Gentiles forms the central point of the second journey (comp. note on xiii. 15). But while the two apologies against Judaism, the one in the mouth of Stephen before the high council, the other in the mouth of the apostle Paul in the Pisidian city of Antioch, turn into bitter complaints against the Jews and end with threats, the speech before us, in accordance with the fundamental ideas

of the writer, dwells especially upon the near approach of pagan piety (ver. 23) and the pagan idea of God (vv. 27 sq.) to Christianity, speaks of the ground of pagan errors as simply ignorance which God has overlooked, and brings forward no complaints or accusations (ver. 30).

20. *Strange* should be "foreign."

22. *Mars' hill* should be "Areopagus." — *Too superstitious* should be "very god-fearing." The word purposely leaves it doubtful whether the fear was a true and spiritually healthy fear or superstitious.

23. *For as I passed by, &c.*, should be "For as I passed through and looked at your sanctuaries." — *Whom . . . him* should be "what . . . that." — According to other accounts also, there were several altars in Athens such as that which the apostle here speaks of. They were erected on occasions on which it was not known to which god to turn. It is probably from want of accuracy that the inscription known to us from other sources, "to the unknown gods," is here put in the singular, in accordance with the general purpose of the speech.

24 sqq. The unity and supermundane nature of God, the unworthiness of the heathen worship and the unity of the whole race of men formed in the image of God, are the fundamental ideas of the Christian apologetic literature of the second century. The gospel of Paul, on the other hand, opposes to heathenism first of all the holiness of God and the want of all righteousness in the natural man before him. Rom. i. 18 sqq.

28. *Certain also of your own poets*: viz. Aratus of Cilicia and Cleanthes of Lycia. In the passage quoted they refer to Zeus.

30. *God winked at* should be "God overlooked." We have already had a similar view expressed in xiv. 16. The historical Paul, on the other hand, teaches that there is a divine judgment upon the Gentiles (Rom. i. 18 sq.); and further, there is no reference here to the central point of the Pauline gospel, the redeeming death of Christ. Compare with this Paul's own teaching, e.g. in Rom. iii. 19—26.

31. The unexpected introduction of the resurrection and the sudden and abrupt termination of the speech are alike remarkable, and tend to confirm the opinion expressed above that the writer had no authority before him for this speech. See also pp. 264



sqq.—*By that man whom he hath ordained, &c.*, should be “By a man whom he hath appointed, providing [more exactly, ‘having provided’] faith for all by having raised him from the dead.”

34. The account of the formation of a small community in Athens, with the mention of the names of two persons with regard to whom we have no other historical information, compels us to suppose that the writer must have had some distinct tradition before him.

#### CHAPTER xviii.

1. In Corinth, according to the evidence of his two extant Epistles to the Corinthians, Paul founded a very large community, in which the gospel gave rise to the richest and most varied spiritual life, and with which he kept up an unbroken and most lively intercourse until the time of his imprisonment. In spite of this, the writer of the Book of Acts only speaks cursorily of it, and barely mentions the apostle's second residence in Corinth (see xx. 2). There can scarcely be any other ground for this than his fear of recalling to memory the violent and fundamental disputes with this community which the apostle had to sustain.

2. *Aquila*: According to ver. 26, Aquila and his wife had already been converted to the gospel, and this statement is confirmed by 1 Cor. xvi. 19. As the writer gives no express account of the conversion, he would seem to assume that it had already taken place in Rome, where Paul also assumed the existence of a large Christian community when he wrote his Epistle to the Romans in the winter of 58-59, A.D.—This edict of the emperor Claudius against the Jews is known to us from several pagan writers. The execution of it at any rate cannot have been very strict and have lasted very long, as it is assumed in xxviii. 17 sqq. that there was a considerable Jewish population in Rome, and, according to Rom. xvi. 3, we find Aquila and Priscilla again in Rome in the year 58 A.D.

5. *Was pressed in the spirit and testified* should be “was zealously engaged in teaching, testifying.”

6. Here again the apostle's preaching to the Gentiles is represented as being due to the refusal of the Jews to hear him. See notes on xiii. 46 sqq., xxviii. 17 sqq.

11. *A year and six months*: This embraces the whole period of his stay at Corinth, including, therefore, what is mentioned in

ver. 18. The writer purposely describes only one event out of this long period of the apostle's most fruitful labours, and he selects one that serves to support his fundamental view of the relation of the Jews and Gentiles to the gospel (comp. note on ver. 1).—It was during this residence in Corinth that the ("first") Epistle to the community at Thessalonica was probably written. Paul while at Athens had already heard from Timothy how they fared (1 Thess. iii. 1, 2).

12. *Gallio*: brother of Seneca, well-known Roman philosopher.—[*Deputy*: properly "proconsul."]

13. *Contrary to the law*: According to what follows, this means the Mosaic law, but then it is impossible to understand how the charge could be brought before a Gentile court.

14. *Lewdness*: "roguery."

15. Read: "But if it be a dispute concerning doctrine and names and your own law, look to it yourselves."—This decision of Gallio's corresponds entirely with the fundamental view of the book; the writer delights to adduce here the words of a Roman statesman which openly and solemnly testify that the Roman state perceives no danger to itself from the gospel.

17. *All the Greeks* should be "they all." It refers, however, to the Greeks and not to the Jews.—*Sosthenes* was probably one of Paul's chief accusers. Gallio's indifference to the attack upon him reflects the writer's hostility to the Jews.

18. *Having shorn his head*: Though this may refer either to Paul or Aquila, in either case it is intended to show Paul's zeal for the Jewish law (comp. notes on xvi. 2, xxi. 24). Vv. 21 sq. also serve the same purpose; and the circumstance that nothing more is said as to the reason for the vow which was discharged by this shaving of the hair, necessarily leads us to suppose that what is meant is actually a Jewish Nazirite's vow or something of that kind.—*Cenchrea* is the harbour of Corinth east of the city.

21. *I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem*: These words are wanting in a considerable number of the MSS., but, apart from other reasons for regarding them as authentic, they suit the connection in which they appear, and are in agreement with the views of the writer. They are moreover assumed in what follows.

22. *Cæsarea*: This Cæsarea is the Palestinian sea-port on the



Mediterranean between Joppa and Dora (see viii. 40).—*Gone up*: i.e. to Jerusalem. This journey is not mentioned in Gal. ii., and hence we must probably come to the same conclusion about it as about the one in Acts xi. 30.

xviii. 23—xxi. 14.

Paul's third missionary journey. His labours in Ephesus. Conclusion of this stage of his career.

23. The earlier and middle parts of the third missionary journey which begins here, with the exception of the stay at Ephesus, are only cursorily described, and a number of the districts which Paul had formerly visited are not mentioned. On the writer's plan, see notes on xiii. 1, 15, xvii. 19.—*The country of Galatia*, here as in xvi. 6 (see note), is the district, not the province. The writer purposely avoids mentioning the great contest with the gospel under the law which the apostle had to sustain at this very time, in order that he might preserve from complete apostasy and submission to it the communities in Galatia which he had found when he visited them already alienated from his gospel free from the law, and which after his departure had attached themselves still more definitely to Jewish Christianity in consequence of the influence of emissaries from Jerusalem.

24 sqq. In the section which here follows, the writer describes, for the first and only time, labours of Paul which lasted for a considerable period in one of the most important communities, and in this respect he also places Paul upon an exact equality with Peter as a chief apostle. Hence it is intimated that Apollos, the teacher whom we read of in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, occupies a very inferior position to that of the apostle, as only proclaiming salvation to the Jews and (like the deacon Philip in contrast to Peter, viii. 4 sqq.) not possessing the gift of the holy spirit (vv. 24—28). The same purpose is served by the narrative of the disciples of John, who do not receive the holy spirit until Paul lays his hands upon them (xix. 1—7), and by the miraculous action of Paul (xix. 11—20). Finally, in Ephesus also, at the close of his labours, as described in the Book of Acts, Paul must again among the Gentiles be justified in turning to the conversion of the Gentiles by the refusal of the Jews to hear him (xix. 8—10). On the other hand, after a great victory over the idolatry of the Gentiles, he receives the most favourable

judgment from the Gentile authorities, and indeed an express declaration of his innocence of those charges which were being spread abroad concerning him by the Jews.

25. There can be no doubt that Apollos is here regarded as a Christian, and that the writer only intends to describe the lower stage of his preaching of the gospel in comparison with that of the apostle. For the same reason his preaching is described (ver. 28) as only hanging on the Old Testament and addressed to Jews. These accounts can scarcely be reconciled, indeed, with the certain testimony of the apostle himself, who places Apollos upon an equality with himself, and represents him as his immediate successor in his preaching to the Gentiles (1 Cor. i. 12, iii. 6, &c.).

26. *More perfectly* should be "more exactly."

#### CHAPTER xix.

1. *The upper coasts* should be "the upper country," i.e. the inland districts of Asia Minor as distinguished from the coast.—*Disciples*: The writer does not, as might be supposed, mean disciples of John, but Christians, who however were only acquainted with the Johannine and not with the Christian baptism, and hence occupied the same inferior position as Apollos in xviii. 25. But when we find them proceeding to acknowledge that they have not so much as heard whether there be any holy spirit, we have no other indication of any disciples occupying such a position as that in the apostolic age, and indeed it is difficult to understand the possibility of it. This, however, only makes it more evident that it is the intention of the writer to assign to Paul, in a case in regard to which there can be no doubt, the apostolic privilege of imparting the spirit. The speaking with tongues and prophesying which follows in ver. 6 is the actual voucher for it.

4. *Christ Jesus* should be "Jesus."

9. *That way*: "the way."—*The school of one Tyrannus* should be "the school of Tyrannus." This may have been simply the name of the place where they met, but any how the context shows that he was a Gentile.

10. This statement that Paul laboured for two years in the province of Asia, introduces the close of the narrative of his missionary labours among the Gentiles in the Book of Acts. It pro-



bably means that the general communication between the capital of Ephesus and the rest of Asia Minor caused his work practically to extend through the province, for there is no indication here of Paul's having undertaken any journeys from Ephesus, nor is there any trace elsewhere of his having done so.

12. Comp. v. 15. The writer accepts as a fact the transference of the apostle's miraculous powers to his clothes, and in so doing shows that he stands at a very considerable distance from the apostolic age.

13. *Vagabond*: "strolling."

14. It is impossible to say exactly in what sense Sceva is called *chief of the priests*, or why seven sons are mentioned, while it appears from verse 16 that only two were engaged in the affair here described.

16. *Overcame them* should be "overcame both of them."

19. *Curious arts* should be "unprofitable things," i.e. sorcery and incantations, the forms of which were kept in books of magic. 50,000 drachmæ = £2000. This account of the valuation of the books, a thing altogether improbable in itself, to say nothing of the greatness of the amount, is a clear indication of the mythical nature of the authorities which the writer here makes use of.

21. Here, as in xx. 1, 3, 16, in accordance with the plan of the book, Paul's last journey to Macedonia and Greece appears only as being made en route for Jerusalem. Further, the real motive for this journey to Jerusalem, viz. to bring the great collection which had been made (1 Cor. xvi. 3), is omitted, and indeed, according to xx. 16, here again the intention of keeping a Jewish festival is adduced as his motive. The writer begins even here to prepare for the journey to Rome, of which he gives so full an explanation and description in the last chapters of his work.

23 sqq. According to 1 Cor. xv. 32, xvi. 9, 2 Cor. i. 8—10, Paul had considerable opposition to contend with in Ephesus, and passed through many dangers, so that even his life was in jeopardy; but in these passages there is no indication of the great victory over paganism described here. Hence, although it is highly probable that there is some foundation in fact for the present account, we have no proof at all of the accuracy of its details.

24. *Shrines*: i.e. small models of the famous temple of Diana at Ephesus.

25. *Craft* should be "gain." [The word is the same that is rendered "gain" in ver. 24.]

27. *So that not only, &c.*, should be "And not only is there danger of this business of ours being destroyed."

31. *Chief* should be "chiefs:." Chiefs of Asia, or Asiarchs, was the name given to the presidents annually elected by the privileged cities of the province of Asia to preside over the public games in honour of the gods and the emperor.

33 sq. This sudden introduction of Alexander into the narrative without any explanation is probably due to the writer's having made use of some source of information the remaining statements of which he does not give us. In any case, Alexander must be regarded as a Jew, not as a Jewish Christian, and this is sufficient for the writer, who only wants to show that here, as in Corinth (xviii. 17), the wrath of the Gentiles turned from the Christians against a Jew. Judaism appears here as the common enemy of Christianity and the Gentile state. We must not suppose that this is the Alexander of 2 Tim. iv. 14.

35—40. This speech declares publicly and solemnly that Christianity is not dangerous to the state, and even proceeds, perhaps with reference to the charges brought against Paul by the Jews and Jewish Christians (xviii. 13, xxi. 28), to absolve the Christians from the charge of blasphemy against idols.

35. *Worshipper*: "guardian."—*From Jupiter* should be "from heaven."

38. *The law is open*: "the courts are being held." [*Deputies*: "proconsuls."]

39. *Enquire* should be "seek."

40. *There being no cause, &c.*, should be "there being no culprit to bring forward, so that we might be in a position to give an account of this tumult."

#### CHAPTER XX.

1 sqq. The writer only gives here a short survey of the apostle's last journey, being indeed concerned only with the return and the journey to Jerusalem (see xix. 21). The account of this commences in ver. 4, where the journal begins again (xx. 5—15, xxi. 1—18). Verse 3 is intended to explain why this plan was



delayed by the pursuit of so circuitous a route. It is probably not without reason that Paul's residence in Corinth during the winter of 58-59 is not so much as mentioned here. It was connected with his severest contests with the Jewish Christianity of the law, which had already necessitated the two extant Epistles of the apostle to the community at Corinth, as well as two that have been lost; and it was at this time that he wrote the Epistle which set forth most decisively and most fully his own peculiar gospel free from the law, viz. the Epistle to the Christian community in Rome.

4. *Into Asia* should be omitted.—*Sopater* should be "Sopater, son of Pyrrhus."—*Gaius of Derbe*: to be distinguished from the Gaius of Macedonia mentioned in xix. 29.

5. *These* may be most naturally understood to mean all the companions of Paul who have been mentioned. We must then, however, conclude that none of them (Timothy included) can have been the writer of the "journal." (See pp. 264 sqq.)

7 sqq. *The disciples* (ver. 7) and *they* (ver. 8) should be "we."—As Peter is said to have raised the dead (ix. 36 sqq.), so also is Paul here. There is no doubt that this is what the writer means, for he says in ver. 9, "he was taken up dead," and besides, he could have no other reason for describing what was otherwise an unimportant accident (see note on ver. 10). At the same time, the whole description of the scene is so vivid and so consistent, contrasting in this with many other miraculous narratives of the Book of Acts, that we may with great probability regard it as taken from the original narrative of Paul's companion, and, apart from the writer's view of the matter, there is nothing we need doubt in the story.

10. *His life is in him*: It appears from the context that what is meant by this is that this has been effected by Paul.

13. *Assos*: a sea-port of Mysia south of Troas.

14. *Mitylene*: capital of the island of Lesbos.

15. *Over against Chios*: i.e. off Chios. *Chios* and *Samos* are islands in the *Ægean Sea*. *Trogyllium* is the name of a city and promontory on the coast of Ionia.

16—38. This section bears the marks of being an insertion of the writer into the original narrative before him. Its object is to introduce an address to the presbyters of Ephesus, the contents

of which are of the greatest importance to the writer (comp. notes on xiii. 15, xvii. 19). The address itself, no less than the rest of the section, is most closely connected with the departure of the apostle from the communities which he had founded, and foretells (vv. 23—25, 29, 38) his end with a precision which can hardly be reconciled with passages in his contemporary or even later Epistles, e.g. Rom. xv. 22 sqq., Phil. ii. 24, Philem. 22. It is, moreover, very remarkable for its defence of Paul against charges which in the Book of Acts are never brought against him from any quarter (especially in vv. 20, 27, 34 sqq.), and finally for the view which it takes of the presbyters and bishops as responsible guides and leaders of the community standing over the laity and appointed by God himself (vv. 28 sq., 31 sq.), a view which is quite alien to those of the apostle found elsewhere. All these things show that the address itself is the writer's own composition. Such a justification of the apostle, and the importance here attached to his personality and his martyr's death, agree very well with the general plan of the writer, and it is only from his later position that we can explain the fundamental distinction here made between the priests and the laity.—It is remarkable that Paul devotes no time to the important community at Ephesus, while he spends seven days at Troas (ver. 6; comp. also note on xix. 21).

18. *From the first day that I came into Asia*: see xviii. 19. What is meant is proconsular Asia, with Ephesus as its capital; and, according to the Book of Acts, Paul had, since the time of entering it, only left Ephesus once for a short time (xviii. 22—xix. 1).

22. *Bound in the spirit*: In these words the apostle is represented as himself declaring the necessity of a martyr's death.

23. *The Holy Ghost*: i.e. Christian prophets whose utterances the writer afterwards reports, xxi. 4, 10 sqq.

24. *But none of those things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself*, should be "But for myself, I esteem my life of no value."

28. [*Over the which*: strictly "in which."] *Of God* should be "of the Lord."—The elders here appear to be responsible for the salvation of the church.

29. There is no trace whatever in Paul's authentic Epistles of



the heretics so distinctly indicated here, nor of any fear of their appearance. Hence this passage can only be regarded as the writer's warning against the teachers of Gnostic errors in the second century thrown into the form of apostolic prophecy, and it can only be explained on this supposition.

35. *I have shewed you all things, &c.*, should be "I have shewed you that one ought to work, to help the weak and to remember," &c.—Paul in his Epistles often assures us that he is working disinterestedly for the good of the community (e.g. 1 Cor. iv. 12, ix. 4 sqq.), but he never demands, as here, that the ministers and preachers of the gospel in general should all refuse to be supported by the community, just as he had done personally (see 1 Cor. ix. 7—14; Gal. vi. 6). The thought here expressed serves as a defence of the apostle against the well-known accusations of his opponents.—*It is more blessed to give than to receive*: a saying of Jesus not contained in our Gospels.

#### CHAPTER xxi.

1. Continuation of the narrative of Paul's companion, after the insertion [xx. 16—38].—*Cos* [A.V. Coos] and *Rhodes* are islands off the south-west coast of Asia Minor.—*Patara*: a sea-port over against Rhodes.

3. *Was to unlade* should be "discharged."

4. *And finding disciples* should be "and having found the disciples:" i.e. the disciples who were there.—At every step the writer interweaves in his narrative prophecies and forebodings of the catastrophe in Jerusalem.

7. *And when we, &c.*: "But we finished our voyage from Tyre and came to Ptolemais."—*Ptolemais*: a sea-port inhabited by Gentiles north of Mount Carmel, now known as Acca or St. Jean d'Acre. For some unknown reason the journey from this place to Cæsarea is made by land.

8. *That were of Paul's company* should be omitted.—*Philip*: see vi. 5, viii. 5 sqq.—There is other ecclesiastical tradition of the prophesying daughters of Philip. The writer seems to have introduced this passage from the record of Paul's companion, in order to bring in the prophecy concerning the lot that awaited the apostle (see note on ver. 4).

10. *Agabus* appears also in xi. 27 sq. as coming down from

Judea, and his prophecy of a famine gives rise to Paul's journey to Jerusalem. It is doubtless intended that Paul's present resistance to the very same prophet shall set his firmness and readiness for a martyr's death the more vividly before us, and verse 13 may then very well be put down to the writer, especially as ver. 14 follows very well upon ver. 12.

11. *The Jews*: According to ver. 32, it is not the Jews, but a Roman officer who seizes Paul. But after all he only does so in order to rescue him from the Jews, who appear in the Book of Acts as the proper enemies of Paul and the responsible cause of his fate. For this very reason, considering the connection in which we find it, there is nothing remarkable in the fact that Paul expects to die in the prophet-slaying capital of his enemies. Comp. note on xx. 16 sqq.

xxi. 15—xxvi. 32.

Arrest and trial of Paul.

15. *Took up our carriages* should be "equipped ourselves."—The section which here follows, with the exception of vv. 15—18, does not belong to the journal. The writer has dealt very freely with his historical material, and transformed it into a defence of Paul against the accusations of the Jews and Jewish Christians. This is apparent especially in the circumstance that here again the Jews alone appear as the true enemies of Paul, compelling his arrest (xxi. 27 sqq.), his removal to Cæsarea (xxiii. 12 sqq., 23), and his appeal to the emperor (xxv. 3, 8, 10 sq.), and steadily seeking his death (xxi. 22 sqq.); while Paul as before receives protection from the Roman officials, and every kind of respect as a Roman citizen (xxi. 32, xxii. 24 sqq., xxiii. 10, 23 sqq., 27, 31 sqq., 34 sqq., xxiv. 23, xxv. 1 sq., 16). In the next place, the apostle himself, in spite of this hostility of the Jewish people, occupies doctrinally a position of entire conformity to the Jewish law (xxi. 24 sqq., xxiii. 3, 5, xxiv. 17), and in his defence is most jealously careful to prove his Jewish orthodoxy (xxii. 3 sqq., 17, xxiv. 11 sqq., 17, xxvi. 2 sqq., 22). This, however, brings the Book of Acts into collision, not only with the historical Paul's gospel free from the law, but also with itself; for if Paul really preached a gospel according to the law, the prejudice and hatred of the Jewish Christians against him, of which the Book of Acts itself speaks (xxi. 21 sqq.), must appear altogether incomprehen-



sible. Equally unintelligible on that supposition are the accusations made by the Jews, his being kept in custody by Romans in Cæsarea and Rome, and, finally, the complete want of any sign of sympathy with the lot of the apostle on the part of the Christians in Jerusalem. In the third place, while the accusations of the Jews are purely imaginary, the point upon which Paul actually defends himself (viz. the proclamation of the gospel among the Gentiles, xxii. 21) never appears as one of their charges against him. All this has rendered the description of the trial, notwithstanding the historical foundation on which it rests, contradictory and confused; and, in particular, the three speeches of Paul in his own defence (xxii. 1 sqq., xxiv. 10 sqq., xxvi. 1 sqq.) give us scarcely anything more than the old sketch of the apostle's life, and his gospel stripped of all its individuality.

16. *And brought with them one Mnason*: "and brought us to one Mnason."

17. *The brethren*: i.e. the whole Christian community at Jerusalem. The special interview with the leaders for a definite purpose then follows in ver. 18. This verse, which belongs to the journal, shows us that there must have been some mention there of a meeting with James.

20. *How many thousands*: strictly "how many myriads." Probably this is intended to include Jews beyond the limits of Jerusalem and Palestine.

22. This verse should read, "How then? They will certainly hear that thou art come?"

23. *A vow*: i.e. a nazirite's vow (see note on xviii. 18). The apostle is to avail himself of this opportunity to prove to the Jewish Christians his zeal for the law. It is quite certain that the historical Paul could not have consented to this.

24. *And purify, &c.*, should be "and sanctify thyself with them and pay the charges for them."

25. "But" should be inserted at the beginning of this verse.—This verse recalls the resolutions of xv. 22 sqq., in order to show how strictly they were adhered to, both by Paul and also by the Jewish Christians. (See note on xv. 1 sqq.)

26. This verse should read, "Then Paul on the next day took the men, sanctified himself with them, and went into the temple and announced the completion of the days of sanctification, until

the offering was offered for every one of them.”—“Sanctified himself:” i.e. imposed upon himself the abstinence required by the vow.—“Announced:” i.e. to the priests who had to declare the redemption of the vow.—“The completion of the days:” i.e. the approaching completion of the seven days of abstinence, after which only an offering was still required (comp. ver. 27).

27. *The seven days*: It appears that, according to the writer’s view, out of the thirty days’ naziriteship of the men spoken of in ver. 24, seven days still remained, which Paul undertook with them, and that, in consideration of his paying the charges, this shorter period was reckoned to him as the full time. According to xxiv. 11 (comp. also xxi. 16, 18, 26, xxii. 30, xxiii. 11, 12, 31, xxiv. 1), these seven days could not yet have elapsed.

29. *Trophimus*: see xx. 4.—It is by no means clear how this mistake of the Jews is to be explained. Moreover, the charge of having profaned the temple is only repeated once (xxiv. 6), Paul never defends himself against it, and it plays no part at all in the trial. Perhaps it is only an allegorical expression of the general reproach of surrendering the sanctuary to the Gentiles, which was made against him by Jews and Jewish Christians alike.

31. *Came*: strictly “came up,” i.e. into the fortress Antonia near the temple.—[*Chief captain*: properly “tribune” here and throughout the book.—*Band*; properly “cohort.”]

33. *Took him* should be “seized him.”

34. *Castle* should be “barracks,” i.e. the barracks in the fortress. [So also in ver. 37 and throughout the book.]

37. *He said* should be “he saith.”

38. *Art not thou* should be “art thou then not.”—*That Egyptian*: “the Egyptian.” This Egyptian had undertaken as a divine prophet to wage war from the wilderness against the Romans, in the reign of Nero. He had been defeated by the governor Felix and had fled. The officer’s confusion of Paul with him is very remarkable. The writer appears to have accepted the remark purposely, in order, by setting forth the contrary, to make the innocuousness of Paul’s gospel in regard to the state perfectly clear.

40. *In the Hebrew tongue*: Paul is here made as Jewish as possible, and here he does not, as we might expect from ver. 39, appeal to his Roman citizenship.



## CHAPTER xxii.

1. The apostle's defence, which follows here, has a distinct uniformity, and is complete in itself, in spite of the interruption after ver. 21. Its purpose is to prove the apostle's zeal for Judaism and the law, and to explain his calling to be an apostle to the Gentiles, equally with his removal from Jerusalem, solely on the ground of the express and repeated command of God in opposition to the apostle's own will. The circumstance also that the speech is addressed to "fathers," i.e. to members of the high council, which one would not expect in the midst of a tumultuous mob, corresponds with this fact of the speech being directed against the prejudices of Judaism.

3. *Perfect manner* should be "strictness."—*Zealous*: i.e. against the gospel.

9. The very reverse of ix. 7.

12 sqq. In accordance with the purpose of the speech, the calling of the apostle to the mission to the Gentiles is here put simply in the mouth of a faithful adherent of the law, whereas in ix. 15 Christ himself expresses this demand to Ananias [and in xxvi. 16 sqq. directly to Paul himself].

13. *Stood* should be "approached."—*I looked up upon him* should be "I received my sight and looked upon him."

17 sqq. In ix. 26 sqq. there is not a word about this vision in the temple upon which here so much stress falls as a new and express command of God,

19. An objection raised by the apostle intended by the writer to show his love for the Israelites.

24. [*Chief captain*: see note on xxi. 31.—*Castle*: see note on xxi. 34.]—It is not till the decisive moment, in extreme necessity, that Paul brings forward his Roman citizenship, then to receive the more brilliant satisfaction from the Roman official.

25. *And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said*, should be "And when they had stretched him out for scourging, he said." The officer threatens torture because he has not understood the speech delivered in Hebrew.

26. *Take heed what thou doest*: "What art thou about to do?"

28. The remark of the officer that he had purchased his Roman citizenship, throws into bolder relief Paul's declaration that he is a Roman citizen by birth.

29. This fear on the part of the officer is probably only mentioned in order to lay the greater weight upon Paul's Roman citizenship. Otherwise, seeing that he was ignorant of it, such fear would be quite unintelligible. He does not actually release the apostle from his fetters until the next day, and indeed after the examination Paul always appears to be in bonds (see xxviii. 18 and many other passages, especially xxvi. 29 and xxviii. 20).

#### CHAPTER xxiii.

1. Paul, conscious of his innocence in regard to the demands of Judaism, assumes a specially bold attitude.—*In all good conscience*: It appears from what follows, and from all the apostle's speeches in his own defence, that this expression is not, as might be supposed, to be referred only to the period since his conversion; it is equally valid of his relation to Judaism (see especially xxiv. 14 sqq., xxvi. 22). Of course this cannot be reconciled with the consciousness of not having fulfilled the law which is expressed in Gal. ii. 15 sqq., Rom. vii. 14 sqq.

5. This withdrawal of a just reproof, and humility before the Jewish high-priest, is intended by the writer to show Paul's submission to the law. In itself, the ignorance of his being the high-priest is as improbable as Paul's humble submission to the authority of the law is incredible.

6. *When* should be "since."—The Book of Acts actually does reduce the difference of doctrine between Paul's gospel and Judaism to the question of belief in the personal resurrection of Jesus (xxii. 3 sqq., xxiv. 14 sq., xxv. 19, and elsewhere frequently). As a matter of fact, however, this distinction goes far deeper and includes far more. It would have been impossible for the historical Paul, when a Christian, still to call himself a Pharisee, and equally impossible for the Pharisees to take his part (as they do here in ver. 9). They are to a certain extent Christianized here, as Gamaliel is in v. 33 sqq.

9. *Let us not fight against God* should be omitted.

11. This verse introduces the journey to Rome to which everything that follows relates.

12. *Certain of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under a curse*, should be "the Jews united and cursed themselves."—*The Jews*: i.e. the people as a whole. There is no



reference whatever here and in 14 sq. to the Pharisees taking Paul's part.

14. *Eat nothing* should be "taste nothing."

15. *To-morrow* should be omitted.

17. Here and in all that follows we should again specially notice the willing assistance and consideration of the Roman officials, who deliver Paul and protect him, taking the most comprehensive measures for this purpose.

20. *As though they would inquire somewhat of him more perfectly*, should be "as though they would learn something more exact concerning him."

21. *A promise from thee* should be "a promise given by thee."

24. *And provide them beasts* should be "and let them provide beasts of burden."

26. *Felix*: Antonius Felix was a freedman of the emperor Claudius and brother of Pallas, the well-known powerful favourite of Claudius and Nero. In the year 53 A.D. he had been made procurator of the province to which Judea belonged. The writer of the Book of Acts maintains a significant silence concerning the absolute incapacity of Felix to deal with the difficult question that had come before him, his unrestrained and capricious despotism, his cruelty and his servile disposition.

27. *Should have been killed* should be "was on the point of being killed."—*An army*: "the soldiers."—The letter only brings forward the points with which the writer of the book is concerned; viz. the deliverance of Paul from the hands of the Jews and the protection of his rights as a citizen.

30. *Laid wait for* should be "had on foot a plot against."—*Farewell* should be omitted.

31. *Antipatris*: in the plain on the high road between Cæsarea and Jerusalem.—*By night*: probably only the time of their decampment, and not of the arrival in Antipatris.

35. The respectful conduct of the Romans is shown by Paul's being taken, not to prison, but to the government head-quarters.—[*Judgment hall*: strictly "Prætorium."]

#### CHAPTER xxiv.

1. *Who informed* should be "and they informed."

2. *Quietness*: i. e. peace from the bands of robbers which

infested the land, the contest with whom was the chief task of every governor of Palestine in those days.—*Very worthy deeds are done unto this nation*, should be “this nation enjoys good institutions.”

3. *We accept it* should be “we acknowledge it.”—*Always*: “in all ways.”

6—8. These verses should read, “And he hath also attempted to profane the temple, from whom, if thou wilt inquire into it, thou canst receive information concerning all that of which we accuse him.” The rest should be omitted. [There is no MS. authority for omitting the words *whom we took*.]

[9. *Assented*: the best MSS. have “joined in attacking him.”]

10. *Of many years*: viz. since A.D. 53, i.e. for six years.—*The more cheerfully*: “fearlessly.”

11. See note on xxi. 27.—*For to worship*: comp. xx. 16, where the same motive for the journey from the Jewish law appears.

14. See note on xxiii. 6 sqq.

16. *And herein do I*, should be “wherefore I also.”

17. *Many* should be “several.”—Even the well-known great collection for the Christian community at Jerusalem (1 Cor. xvi. 1 sqq.) appears here as a proof of Paul’s adherence to the people of Israel.

18. *Whereupon* should be “in the midst of which.”—*Certain Jews from Asia*: The originators of the charge and witnesses of the offence Paul had committed are represented as absent.

22. *That way* [strictly “the way”]: i.e. the way of salvation (see ix. 2, xvi. 17, xviii. 25 sq.).—The answer given by Felix is an excuse, the real reason for delaying his decision being, according to our author, the deeper knowledge of Christianity which he is here said to have possessed and his relation to Judaism. That Felix actually had any such deeper knowledge is in itself extremely unlikely. It is probably only intended, in accordance with the ideas of the writer, to show again the juster judgment of Christianity on the part of the Roman civil power. The same thing is also said of Festus, xxv. 10.

23. *Liberty* should be “indulgence.”—*Or come* should be omitted.

24. *Drusilla*: the daughter of Herod Agrippa I. (see note on xii. 1) and former wife of a prince of Emesa, from whom Felix



whose third wife she now was, had enticed her away with the help of a Jew named Simon (see note on viii. 9 sqq.). The fact that she was a Jewess seems to be purposely emphasized here.

25 sq. This picture of the deep impression made upon Felix by the apostle's preaching is irreconcilable alike with the well-known character of Felix, and with the mercenary intention and lust for popular favour which follow. These motives lead him, in spite of his own better knowledge (ver. 22), to detain Paul unjustly; while in the first place he had no longer any need of popular favour, and in the second place he could only have obtained it by delivering Paul up to the high council. The writer, hastening rapidly over this period of two years, desires on the one hand to establish Felix's favourable judgment of Paul, and on the other hand to explain his detention of him, but he does not succeed in reconciling these two things.

27. This change took place in the year 60 or 61. It is probable that Paul's Epistle to Philemon dates from the period of this two years' imprisonment in Cæsarea.

#### CHAPTER XXV.

In this chapter are repeated before Festus in a short account the same accusations and the same defence that we have already had before Felix, except that Paul's having to defend himself against the charge of having offended against the emperor (ver. 8) is new, and is scarcely consistent with ver. 18. More important, however, is the apostle's appeal to the emperor (vv. 10—12), which is necessitated by the partiality of Festus (vv. 9, 10), whereas in xxviii. 19 only the hostility of the Jews is represented as the ground of his appeal. The writer seems here to wish to explain the necessity for Paul's appeal by the conduct of Festus, although the course attributed to Festus elsewhere is much more probable considering his caution and justice, and is hardly to be reconciled with this partiality (comp. vv. 4, 12, 16, 20, 25 sq.).

2. *High-priest*: "high-priests."

3. *Desired favour* should be "begged a favour."—*Laying wait in the way to kill him* should be "plotting to kill him by the way."

5. *Able* should be "in power."

6. *More than ten days* should be "not more than eight or ten days."

7. *Against Paul* should be omitted.

9. *Willing to do the Jews a pleasure* should be “desiring to earn the gratitude of the Jews.”

12. *The council*: i.e. his own council, not here the high council of the Jews.

13. *Agrippa*: i.e. Herod Agrippa II., son of Agrippa I. The emperor Claudius gave him first the kingdom of Chalcis and afterwards the tetrarchies formerly held by Philip and Lysanias, with the title of king and the supervision of the temple.—*Bernice*, of deserved notoriety, sister of Agrippa II. and Drusilla. She was afterwards the mistress of Vespasian and Titus.—The appearance of the Jewish royal pair in connection with the rest of the description serves finally to establish the apostle's innocence of all the charges laid against him by the Jews. Hence the decision is left entirely to Agrippa (vv. 18 sq.), while Festus cannot even enter any distinct charge against the apostle in the letter to the emperor (ver. 26), though such complaints as he might have sent must have been before him, whether he regarded them as true or false, and indeed he knew well enough what they were (ver. 8).

14. *Many days* should be “several days.”

16. *To die* should be omitted.

18. This verse should read, “Then accusers came round him and made no accusations of the kind that I expected.”

19. *Superstition* should be “religion.”

20. *And because I doubted of such manner of questions*, should be “But as I was in a difficulty as to the investigation of these things.”

27. *Crimes* should be “accusations.”

#### CHAPTER XXVI.

2. The defence which here follows is intended to prove the Jewish orthodoxy of the apostle from his past life, and hence is addressed expressly to the Israelite Agrippa as a competent witness and judge (vv. 2 sqq. 19, 26 sqq.).

4. *At Jerusalem* should be “and at Jerusalem.”

6 sq. On this identification of the Pauline gospel with strict Mosaism, see note on xxiii. 6 sqq.

7. *King Agrippa* should be omitted. [The best MSS. have “O king.”]



8. This question, together with the fact of the resurrection of Jesus, is intended to establish the belief in the fulfilment of the promise of the Old Testament (vv. 6, 7).

9. *I verily thought with myself* should be "And so I thought indeed."

15. *And he said* should be "But the Lord said."

16 sq. What Jesus here says is addressed to Ananias in ix. 17, and spoken by Ananias in xxii. 13 sqq. The explanation of this seems to be that in the present speech it is not so much Paul's authority as an apostle to the Gentiles as his Jewish orthodoxy generally which is to be established.

17. *Delivering* should be "separating."

18. *And to turn them* : "that they may turn."

20. Here (as in ix. 28 sq.) it is asserted that the apostle's mission to the Gentiles was preceded by labours of his own among the Jews, and, as everywhere else in the Book of Acts, his labours among Gentiles and Jews are placed upon the same footing. Both these statements are unhistorical (comp. Gal. i. 22 for the first, and the various passages quoted in the note on xiii. 46 for the second), but they are both easily explained by the purpose of the speech and the book.

22, 23. Here also every distinction between the gospel of Paul and orthodox Mosaism which goes further than the mere question of the acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah, is completely abolished, just as in vv. 6 sqq., 20 (repentance and works), xxiii. 6, &c.

24. The impression made upon the Gentile Festus by the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, corresponds with the impression which (according to xvii. 32) this same doctrine had made at Athens. The writer is only concerned with the competent judgment of the Jew Agrippa (ver. 28), whose reply therefore is not to be understood as ironical, but as quite serious.

28. *Almost thou persuadest me* should be "with little thou persuadest me."

29. *I would to God*, &c., should be "I would to God, with little or much, that not only thou, but also all those that hear me this day, were such as I am," &c.

31, 32. In this private, but all the more significant, acknowledgment, we find the goal of the whole section (xxv. 13—xxvi.

32), viz. the unequivocal absolution of the apostle from all guilt, not only by the Gentiles, but also, above all, by the Jewish authorities.

## xxvii. xxviii.

The apostle's journey to Rome and his labours there.

## CHAPTER xxvii.

1. According to ix. 15, xix. 21, xxiii. 11, xxvii. 24, our author had the journey to Rome in view from first to last as the end of the apostle's labours. Hence, at this important point of his narrative, he again proceeds to quote the words of the journal before him. The want of connection between this first verse and what immediately precedes, indicates plainly the return of the writer to the narrative of his authority. Hence we may at any rate regard this section as in the main the well-authenticated narrative of an eye-witness (as to the person of the original narrator, see pp. 264 sq.). And yet there are some portions of this narrative which have been inserted by the writer of the Book of Acts in order to bring it into harmony with his own fundamental opinions and the object of the whole book (for example, more particularly, xxvii. 21—26, 33—36, xxviii. 17—31).—*Augustus' band*: perhaps the five cohorts in Cæsarea, serving as an imperial body-guard.

2. *Adramyttium*: a city on the coast of Mysia.—According to xx. 4, Aristarchus had been a companion of Paul's travels from the time of his leaving Macedonia, so that there must have been some mention of his departure from him meanwhile in the portion of the journal which is omitted (comp. also xix. 29).

3. The remark about Julius here made is in keeping with the general tone of the Book of Acts and serves the purpose of the writer.—*To refresh himself* should be "to enjoy their attention."

4. *Cyprus* lies to the west of their course, and its lofty coast protects their vessel from the wind.

7. *Cnidus*: a sea-port of Caria at the point of a peninsula which projects into the sea between the islands of Cos and Rhodes. *Salmon*: on the east coast of Crete.

8. *Hardly passing it* should be "passing it with difficulty."—*The fair havens* should be "Fairhavens," on the south coast of Crete.—*Lasea*: unknown.



9. *The fast*: i.e. the fast of the great day of reconciliation which fell at the time of the autumnal equinox.

12. *The more part advised, &c.*, should be "The majority resolved to sail away for Phœnix, a harbour of Crete, lying towards the south-west and north-west, and winter there." Phœnix was on the south coast of Crete.

13. *Loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete*, should be "They weighed anchor and approached nearer to Crete."

14. *Against it*: "contrary to their purpose."

16. *Clauda*: south-west of Crete.—*We had much work to come by the boat* should be "We could scarcely secure the boat" (i.e. the small boat belonging to the ship for use in case of distress).

17. *Lest they should fall into the quicksands* should be "lest they should be cast upon Syrtis," i.e. the great sand-banks on the north coast of Africa to which this name was given.—*Strake sail* should be "let down the tackle," i.e. probably the rigging.

18. *Lightened the ship* should be "cast the freight overboard."

21. The section which here follows, as far as ver. 26 (and probably also the section vv. 33—36), betrays itself as an insertion of the writer into the narrative of the journal. Each passage may be removed from the narrative without any break of the context. The introduction of celestial appearances in moments of extreme danger and on occasion of decisive crises is a general characteristic of our author (xvi. 9, xviii. 9, and especially xxiii. 11), and Paul's confidence here can scarcely be reconciled with ver. 10. Moreover, the expression of the thought that the crew had all been preserved for Paul's sake, is scarcely credible in the mouth of the historical Paul, for it would assume an unnaturally exalted self-consciousness. Finally, ver. 34 has a striking resemblance to Luke xxi. 18.

23. *The angel of God whose I am* should be "an angel of the God whose I am."

27. *In Adria* should be "on the Adriatic Sea."

34. *For this is for your health* should be "for this serves for your safety."

38. *The wheat* should be "the provisions."

39. *They discovered a certain creek with a shore* should be "they noticed a bay with a level beach."—This description of the

locality corresponds very well with the Cala di San Paolo in Malta, which has its name from this event.

40. This verse should read, "And having cut away the anchors, they let them go into the sea, and at the same time they loosed the bands of the rudder and hoisted the top-sail before the wind, and made for the beach."

41. *And falling into a place where two seas met*, should be "and having come upon a tongue of land."

[43. *Willing to save*, i.e. "desiring to save."]

#### CHAPTER xxviii.

1. *And when they were escaped then they knew*, should be "And when we were saved we learned."—It is remarkable that in contrast to the exact and detailed description of the voyage we have so short and fragmentary an account of the three months' stay in Malta. The writer cannot in any case have given us the complete narrative here, and he appears also to have altered it in other ways.—*Melita* or Malta lies south of Sicily. The inhabitants are spoken of as "foreigners" because of their Carthaginian descent.

2, 4. *Barbarous people, barbarians*, should be "foreigners."

3 sqq. The description which here follows is so simple and vivid that it can hardly be legendary, but probably actually stood in the original journal. The original writer, however, does not in the least require us to regard the occurrence as a miracle. The reason which led the writer of the Book of Acts to preserve it is easy to recognize (comp. xiv. 11 sqq.).

7. *The chief man*: this seems to mean a Roman official.

11. *Castor and Pollux*: strictly "the Dioscuri," i.e. Castor and Pollux, the patron deities of sailors. Such individual details clearly mark the description of an eye-witness.

12. *Syracuse*: on the east coast of Sicily.

13. *And from thence we fetched a compass*, should be "And after we had sailed round," i.e., probably, sailed round Sicily.—*Rhegium*: at the southern point of Italy on the straits of Sicily.—*Puteoli*: an important harbour near Naples.

14. This verse should read, "Where we found brethren and were comforted in them, remaining seven days, and so we came to Rome."



15. *The brethren*: i.e. the Christians in Rome.—*Appii Forum*: on the Appian Way, about forty miles from Rome.—*The three taverns*: Trestabernæ (i.e. Three Taverns), nearly ten miles from Appii Forum on the way to Rome, at the extremity of the Pontine marshes.

16. From verse 20 we may reasonably suppose that this soldier was chained to Paul.

17. *Customs* should be "laws."—In Rome also, and indeed in Rome more than anywhere else, the Paul of the Book of Acts must testify to his Jewish orthodoxy and his innocence. Even here he must earn his right to labour among the Gentiles by first turning to the Jews and experiencing and plainly establishing their unwillingness to receive the gospel (comp. xiii. 46 sqq., xviii. 6 sq., xix. 9, &c.).—In this defence of the apostle, the writer lays the blame of his imprisonment so entirely upon the Jews, that he actually affirms that it was the Jews who compelled him to appeal to the emperor, while, according to his own earlier account, it was the governor Festus (see xxv. 9 sq.).—Here, as we have already seen in xxiii. 6, xxiv. 14 sqq., xxvi. 6 sqq., every real distinction between Paul's gospel and Mosaism is denied (comp. latter half of ver. 20).—*Delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans*: incorrect according to xxi. 33 sqq.

21. This statement that the Jews did not know anything about Paul or his trial, is scarcely credible when we consider his twenty years' labours and his two years' imprisonment in Cæsarea; and the writer seems only to have introduced it here in order to afford a motive for Paul's discourse before the Jews, and his clear explanation to them in the imperial city at the very goal of his labours.

24 sqq. Here once more Paul's experience is set forth most plainly and emphatically as the final issue of the whole book. All along the writer has laid the greatest possible stress upon it, and thus in ver. 28 we see the goal and destination of the book itself.

25. *After that Paul, &c.*, should be "Because Paul had pronounced one single judgment, namely, that the holy spirit spoke rightly through the prophet Isaiah," &c.

[29. This verse is not in the oldest MSS.]

30, 31. In these two verses the chief stress lies upon the long freedom in the proclamation of the gospel to all the world which the apostle as a prisoner enjoys in Rome at the hands of the Roman civil power, as he had done in Cæsarea.—As a last memorial of the apostle's labours for the gospel, the Epistle to the Philippians has been preserved to us from this period. There is every probability that at the close of these two years, in the year 64 A. D., he fell a victim to the Neronian persecution. It would have been impossible, however, for our author more distinctly to undermine the whole purpose of his book (viz. to demonstrate the obstinacy of the Israelites and the receptivity of the Gentiles, and the satisfactory relation in which the gospel and the apostle stood to the Roman civil power), than by giving an account of the terrible Neronian persecution, and the martyr's death which Paul suffered. Hence he leaves us in uncertainty as to the result of Paul's trial, in regard to which he has so long kept us in suspense (see note on xii. 17).





A  
SHORT PROTESTANT COMMENTARY  
ON THE BOOKS OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT.  
VOL. II.





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SHORT PROTESTANT COMMENTARY  
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NEW TESTAMENT:

WITH GENERAL AND SPECIAL INTRODUCTIONS.

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EDITED BY  
PROF. PAUL WILHELM SCHMIDT  
AND  
PROF. FRANZ VON HOLZENDORFF.

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BY  
FRANCIS HENRY JONES, B.A.

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## NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

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As in the preceding Volume, the version of the Greek, when given in italics, is that of the English Authorized Version. The version in inverted commas is that given by the German commentator, or, when it simply follows the English version without the words "should be," it is that of Luther accepted by the commentator without remark. When the rendering of the English translators is given without correction, it is either identical with that of the German commentator, or else is already a little closer to the original Greek without differing in sense from his rendering.





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## THE PAULINE EPISTLES.

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PAUL, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, bearing the Jewish name of Saul, was born, according to the most trustworthy tradition, at Tarsus in the province of Cilicia, of Jewish parents. He appears long before his conversion to have borne the Latin name of Paul, according to the custom prevalent among the Jews of those times, in his intercourse with Greeks and Romans. The date of his birth is unknown, but about the year 60 A.D. he was already an "old man" (Philemon 9). We have but little trustworthy information in regard to his youth. His family traced its descent from the tribe of Benjamin (Phil. iii. 5), and according to the Book of Acts it possessed the Roman citizenship, which was at that time liberally given even to the inhabitants of distant provincial cities. The freedom of Rome had been conferred upon the city of Tarsus by Augustus. The flourishing trade of this populous city, its favourable position upon the navigable river Cydnus, and the lively intercourse with the inland districts of Asia and the sea-ports of the Mediterranean, had attracted numbers of Jews, who here, under the protection of the Roman governor, lived undisturbed, and in accordance with their national manners and customs. It was here, amid the scenes and influences of the life of this great city, that Paul grew up. Many of the illustrations which he afterwards made use of are borrowed from the race-course, the wrestling-ground, the theatre, and military life. His knowledge also of Greek philosophy the Apostle gained at Tarsus, where it was zealously cultivated. But notwithstanding all this, *his education* was not Greek, but strictly Jewish. Whether his



father was a Pharisee, as is asserted in the Book of Acts (xxiii. 6) or not, the son at any rate grew up in the spirit of the strictest piety of the Law, and afterwards reckoned himself, not only a Pharisee, but an adherent of that party amongst them which was most especially zealous for the Law. The Book of Acts speaks of him as a pupil of the famous doctor of the Law, Gamaliel, and represents him as dwelling from early youth at Jerusalem (xxvi. 4). At the time of the crucifixion, however, he must have been far away from all that then occurred there, as he afterwards accuses himself only of participating in the guilt of persecuting the believers. It must even remain uncertain whether Jesus was personally known to him. If he really was a pupil in the school of Gamaliel, he far surpassed his teacher in strict devotion to the Law. It appears from his Epistles that he not only received the general religious education of a Jewish youth, but selected the calling of a Scribe. He is no less familiar with the original Hebrew of the Bible than with the Greek translation, which the Jews of the dispersion at that time almost exclusively used. He is not only thoroughly familiar with the details of the history of his people, but he also regards it all in the light of the scholastic theology of the time, as is shown by numerous instances of scholastic interpretation and amplification of the word of Scripture in his Epistles. He not only shares with his contemporaries of his own nation the strictest belief in the divine inspiration of Scripture, but he is also evidently quite at home in the expository art of the schools, in the distinction of a double meaning of Scripture, and the learned methods of extracting in every single case the "spiritual" meaning, and in the discovery of numerous prophecies and "types" of the fulness of the times. While it is clear that the requirements of a sharp and inexorably logical habit of thought had a most decisive influence on the formation of his religious convictions, it is equally clear that his thought followed entirely the forms of the Pharisaic theology of his day, which required in every case scriptural proof, and knew how to obtain it by means of

learned perversion of the word of Scripture, where the actual word of the documents was adverse. In other respects also, not only the Apostle's general opinions and system are those of the Jews of his own day, but more especially his theological convictions sprang originally from Pharisaic ground, and afterwards, "when it pleased God to reveal his Son in him," it was with the help of ideas gained in the Pharisaic school that he worked up his newly attained religious possession into a doctrinal system of his own; and even where he rejected them, he still made use of the arguments and forms of thought which he had learnt in that school. In his letters we still find the tendency, so characteristic of the Pharisees, to direct the imagination to the future, looking with strained attention for the signs of the times, that it may read in them the coming fortune. He shares with them the expectation of the approaching end of the world and final judgment, of the resurrection of the dead and of Messianic glory. Pharisaic, or at any rate cherished with special favour in the Pharisaic schools, is also the belief in intercourse with the supernatural world, in appearances of angels, heavenly voices, miraculous signs and powers, and also in the mysterious power of the "prince" of this world and the troops of evil spirits which always lie in wait for the pious with malignant machinations.

Custom required that the future Scribe should add to his theology the knowledge of a trade. The Book of Acts tells us that Paul followed the occupation of a weaver of coarse cloth, and made tents and other coverings of goats' hair (Acts xviii. 3). Cloth of this kind was an important article of commerce in his native city. It stood the future Apostle in good stead that he was able to support himself by the work of his hands.

Some years after the death of Jesus, we find the young disciple of the Pharisees has reached manhood and is in Jerusalem. His first public appearance, which is mentioned in the Book of Acts, shows us one who is "exceedingly zealous" for the Law. It would appear that the High Council, the supreme spiritual court



of the Jews, had at that time taken advantage of the recall of the Roman governor to make a violent attack upon the new sect of the "Nazarenes." The first to fall a sacrifice to this persecution was Stephen, whose fiery speeches in the synagogues had aroused the wrath of the Pharisees. We find Paul taking a kind of official part in his death (Acts vii. 58). The witnesses for the prosecution, who according to the Law have to complete the bloody work, lay down their upper garments at his feet, and he stands by and beholds the terrible spectacle with unconcealed joy. As a representative of the High Council, he then undertakes to carry the persecution further. He invades the homes, drags men and women forth and delivers them up to prison; and at last, when the community at Jerusalem is scattered, he undertakes the duty of hunting out the fugitives in remote cities (Acts viii. 3, ix. 1 sqq., xxii. 4 sq.; Gal. i. 13).

One of these places of refuge was Damascus, where the numerous Jewish population, then under the protection of an Arabian prince, Aretas, possessed an ethnarch (or national governor) of its own. On the journey thither occurred the event which turned the bitterest opponent of the gospel of the Crucified into its greatest Apostle. Surrounded by the shining light of heaven, Jesus whom he persecuted meets him; Paul falls to the ground, his companions lift him up unconscious and bring him to the city which is near at hand. When he awakes from his stupor he is a Christian.

*The story of the Apostle's conversion* is narrated in detail three times in the Book of Acts (ix. 3 sqq., xxii. 6 sqq., xxvi. 12 sqq.). Indisputably what is there described is an external miraculous occurrence; but the fact that no two of the narrator's three accounts entirely agree with one another, shows how freely he deals with the material with which tradition supplies him. Paul himself, too, refers more than once to the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, which decided his conversion and his call to be an Apostle (Gal. i. 12, 15 sq.; 1 Cor. ix. 1, xv. 8 sqq.), and he places them on a level with the appearances of the Risen One which

had been the privilege of the older Apostles. But, at the same time, he also places them on the same level with the frequent "visions and revelations of the Lord" which he himself continued to experience after his conversion—whether in the body or out of the body he himself could not tell (2 Cor. xii. 1 sqq.); and this latter circumstance makes it highly probable that the accounts of this appearance before Damascus had their origin in an inner process in the Apostle's spiritual life—in a word, that all this rests upon a vision. What is known to us of his peculiar disposition confirms the opinion that he was especially subject to these visionary states. Moreover, such occurrences must have been very frequent in those early times, when the stream of religious enthusiasm rushed through the soul with its first irresistible power, carrying all before it. We can only conjecture what was the spiritual state of Paul when Jesus, whom he persecuted, suddenly appeared to him. The time immediately preceding must have been a time of the deepest excitement of his spiritual life, and of the most violent tension of all his powers. Ineradicably stamped upon his later writings, we still find traces of severe inner struggles which he had to pass through before his conversion. When he afterwards depicts the misery of man under the dominion of the Law and sin, in glowing colours, as an imprisonment under a foreign power, against which the inner man, with his delight in God's law, battles in vain (Rom. vii. 7—25), he lets us see the fierce struggle and labours of his soul when he, a Pharisee still, endeavoured by the strictest righteousness of the Law to please God. The bitter experience of the impossibility of fulfilling the Law was met by the tidings of the Messiah, who had been crucified because of the sins of the people, but had been raised by God from the dead and exalted to heaven. From the examination of prisoners, from confessions of faith uttered upon the rack, there sounded ever in his ears the expressions of joyful confidence in the speedy return of this Messiah who had been offered for their sins according to the Scriptures. But it was precisely this sacrificial death which was the most



serious stumbling-block to the Pharisees. It was not that they were incredulous of one who was dead having returned to life—neither the Pharisaic theology nor the popular belief of the time doubted the possibility of this—but the Law expressly pronounced its curse upon one who was crucified (Deut. xxi. 23), and was it to be supposed that God had raised from the dead and exalted to his right hand one thus accursed? Impossible! was the reply in the soul of the Pharisee. And then, again, he heard the proofs from Scripture which those whom he persecuted brought up against him, and he read in their transfigured faces the peace of God which he himself, with all his zeal for the Law, had sought in vain. Just as he felt most sure of his victory over these Nazarenes, the image of the Crucified and Risen, unknown to himself, had taken shape in his soul. The decision, for which preparation had been made in the struggle of conflicting emotions and thoughts, suddenly broke in upon his soul with overwhelming force. It was clear to him that the Crucified whom he was persecuting had revealed himself to him from heaven in the light of his glory, in a heavenly body, had thus practically demonstrated to him his resurrection from the dead and his exaltation to heaven, and had called his persecutor to be his Apostle.

Paul afterwards regarded his conversion as identical with the call to be an Apostle to the Gentiles (Gal. i. 16). The new religious system (going far beyond the ideas of the first disciples of Jesus), constructed by a strictly logical process upon the belief in the Crucified and Risen, appeared to him afterwards as a direct revelation received from the Lord. Nevertheless, the traditions of the primitive community and Paul's own independent thought have still a very important share in this "Word of the Cross" as we now find it in his Epistles, though it was his nature that the results of long-prepared spiritual development should be determined by way of revelations and visions. All that is most peculiar to his gospel, the doctrines of the abolition of the Law through the cross of Christ and of justification by faith alone, of

the like unworthiness of all men before God and the equal right of believing Gentiles with the sons of Israel in the Messianic kingdom—all this gradually disclosed itself to him in consequence of long meditation, and to no small extent while he was afterwards actually engaged in the fierce contest with obstinate opponents.

In regard to *the beginning of Paul's labours as an Apostle* of the Crucified, we have very scanty information. After having received baptism, he retires for some time to Arabia (i.e. probably the Roman province of that name, the ancient Haran), in order that in solitude and peace he may consider the violent change that has taken place within him. Having come to a clear understanding with himself, he returns to Damascus and appears as a public teacher, until an attempt of the Jews there to murder him compels him to flee by night. As the gates of the city were invested, his friends let him down by the wall in a basket (2 Cor. xi. 32 sq.). It is not till now, three years after his conversion (A.D. 39), that he pays a passing visit to Jerusalem, and then turns at once to Syria and his native land of Cilicia, that he may preach the Crucified there. He seems now to have fixed his residence again for a time in his native city of Tarsus, which formed the natural head-quarters of his mission in Cilicia (Acts xi. 25). Afterwards we find him in company with Barnabas, a Jew of Cyprus who had received a Greek education, in Antioch, the capital of Syria, where a mixed Christian community of Jews and Gentiles had gradually been formed. As was universally the case in Greek cities where there were Jewish synagogues, the Jewish community at Antioch had attracted a number of devout Gentiles, proselytes as they were called, who, without formally going over to Judaism, attended its religious services, and who were only bound to the observance of certain commandments, which were required in order that intercourse might be possible between them and Jews who were faithful to the Law. From among these proselytes proceeded the first confessors of Christ among the Gentiles, and it was their increasing number



which first suggested the idea of formal missions into Gentile lands. It must, however, have been at a comparatively late time that the thought ripened in the Apostle's soul of carrying the preaching of the Crucified into the midst of the Gentile nations, while hitherto it had been held sufficient to open the door to such Gentiles as came of their own free will.

*The first journeys* of Paul and Barnabas of which we have any knowledge were undertaken with a view not to the Gentiles, but to their own countrymen in foreign lands (Acts xiii. 14). Thus they travelled through Cyprus, Barnabas' native land, where there were numbers of Jewish settlers, from one end to the other. Then they returned to the continent, and penetrated by rough mountain-paths into the regions of Mount Taurus. The original object of the difficult journey into the remote districts of Upper Pisidia and Lycaonia was also probably only to preach the Messiah to their scattered fellow-countrymen there. At any rate the synagogues of Antioch in Pisidia and of Iconium formed their starting-points. But it seems that it was here that the crisis occurred which determined Paul without further ado to go to the Gentiles. The communities in these districts belonged at that time to the Roman province of Galatia. If they were the same to which Paul afterwards wrote his Epistle to the "Galatians" (see Introd. to Ep. to Gal.), some physical ailment, which there prostrated the Apostle, occasioned a somewhat protracted stay there. While the Jews turned away from him with repugnance, the first communities consisting purely of Gentile Christians, gathered together in the three neighbouring Lycaonian cities of Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. And as Paul had formerly been "unto the Jews, a Jew," so now he became "unto the Gentiles, a Gentile."

About seventeen years had passed since the conversion of Paul, when the two messengers of the faith again entered the Syrian city of Antioch. The community there, notwithstanding the number of Gentile proselytes, which we may suppose to have been considerable, had remained in tolerably close con-

nection with Jerusalem. Its nucleus still consisted of born Jews, who in their dealings with the brethren in the faith from among the Gentiles, cultivated somewhat freer customs than the stricter Jews, without, however, being willing to renounce the Law of Moses. Meanwhile the number of the Gentile Christians had increased very considerably. Antioch appeared as the metropolis of a new Gentile Church, which was developing itself independently of the primitive Jewish-Christian community. While the earlier Apostles still, as formerly, saw in Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah who was to fulfil the promises given to the people of Israel, Paul now proclaimed the Crucified as the Saviour of all the nations of the world, and removed the partition which separated God's ancient people of the Covenant from the Gentiles. The observance of the Law, circumcision, commands regarding meats, the observance of the Sabbath, were henceforth no longer to be conditions of admission to the Messianic kingdom. As long as the conversions among the Gentiles were only solitary cases, the Jewish Christians might justify a relation between them and the Messianic community after the pattern of Jewish proselytism. But the formation of independent Gentile communities entirely changed the whole position of affairs. Side by side with the Jewish church at Jerusalem, which adhered with its old faithfulness to the precepts of the Fathers, there was now an entirely new community of born Gentiles claiming an equal right with Abraham's children in the house of God, and by its daily increasing numbers threatening to sequester the ancestral right of Israel.

It was not long before the threatening danger was perceived in *Jerusalem*. In the community there, from which the others had sprung, there had arisen at that very time a stricter school, which cast distrustful glances upon the freer customs of its countrymen abroad and their unrestricted intercourse with the Gentiles. Some of the most zealous appeared in Antioch, and demanded the subjection of the Gentile Christians there to the requirements of the Law. Their watchword was "Circumcision."



Violent scenes occurred. At last, in order to adjust the quarrel, Paul and Barnabas set off for Jerusalem. In their company was an uncircumcised Gentile Christian, Titus, whom Paul had employed as his assistant in his conversions of the Gentiles. Once more they succeed in allaying the storm. The earlier Apostles, Peter, John, and James (the brother of the Lord), determined by the divine judgment of facts, extend the right hand of fellowship to Paul, without departing from their own view. They give up the circumcision of the Gentiles and influencing the communities from Jerusalem. They themselves are still resolved, as before, in accordance with the Master's behest, to turn only to the Jews, the ancient people of the divine Covenant, and to preach to them the promised Messiah who was come, not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it (Matt. v. 17, x. 5 sq.). Nevertheless they would not disturb the converters of the Gentiles in their work, which was blessed by the grace of God; only in their communities they must not forget the poor of Jerusalem (Gal. ii. 1—10; Acts xv.).

Peace seemed now to be restored to the Christian communities, and Paul boasted of the agreement which had been come to as a victory. But the final questions had not arisen at all. The whole arrangement assumed a local separation between the Jewish and the Gentile communities, and could be maintained solely on this condition. But just in the centres of intercourse, in the great cities of the Roman empire, Jews and Gentiles were everywhere found side by side. In *Antioch*, where the two parties had hitherto met each other half-way—the Jews by freer customs, the Gentiles by the observance of the commandments imposed upon the proselytes—the differences soon led a second time to conflicts. A short time after the agreement had been come to at Jerusalem, Peter came on a visit to Antioch, and, following the example of Paul and Barnabas, sat down to meat with the Gentile Christians. This immediately became notorious among the zealots for the Law in Jerusalem. Some representatives of James arrived in the Syrian capital and reprimanded the Apostle for his "violation of the Law." And now both sides press

for a decision. The party of James considers it fair and right that at the common meals of believers the Jews should not adapt themselves to Gentile customs, but the Gentiles to Jewish customs. According to their view, the Gentiles are only strangers who have been admitted to the Messianic community, while the family right in it still belongs to the sons of Israel. On the other hand, Paul proceeds to draw the final conclusions from his conception of the death of Christ upon the cross. The belief in this cross is itself a renunciation of righteousness by the Law, a renunciation of every privilege of Jewish blood, an acknowledgment that in the New Covenant established through the Crucified, neither circumcision, nor the external purification of the body, nor any other usage prescribed by the Law, has any further validity. What the Apostle to the Gentiles now announced as the true meaning of the gospel of the Cross, was, in a word, *a new religion, an unconditional and open rupture with the religious system of Judaism*, a complete emancipation of the Messianic faith from all connection with the national community of Israel. Terrified at such a radical innovation, Peter and the Jewish Christians who were there fled back to the strictest observance of the Law, and, as the Zealots had demanded, ceased entirely from all participation in meals with the Gentile Christians. Even Barnabas gave in his adherence to this retrograde movement. A violent quarrel arose, in which Paul contradicted Peter "to the face," and charged his conduct with fear of men, hypocrisy, desertion of the truth. To Paul, this falling back into the barren works of the Law appeared as a restoration of that which had been broken down, a denial of the faith, a rejection of the grace revealed upon the cross of Christ (Gal. ii. 11—21).

The breach was made. A peaceful co-existence of Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity was no longer possible. Wherever the two schools met in one place, the struggle was renewed with increasing bitterness.

Throughout the rest of his life, the man of Tarsus is never free from these contests. And yet his labours as an Apostle to



the Gentiles now surpass anything that they have ever reached before. *During the last six years before his imprisonment*, we find a truly overwhelming missionary activity, the establishment of the Gentile church in Macedonia, Greece, and the province of Asia, repeated visits of the Apostle to the new communities, and, in addition to all this, a whole series of Epistles, now partly lost, by which he sought from a distance to work upon the communities under his care. An irresistible impulse to travel on, which hesitates before no danger, carries him further and further; but where he has once set foot, there he is drawn again and again by irresistible longing, that he may hold fast what he has won and defend it against all attacks. If we consider, in addition to this, that wherever the Apostle went he was obliged to earn his own living by a laborious occupation, that he could only remain for any considerable time in places where he found work, and that after all he was often in want even of the necessities of life, we shall understand the apparent absence from his travels of any definite plan. Often he must take up his staff and go forth before he has succeeded in gathering a community together. He is accused, persecuted, ill-treated till he is at the point of death. From the cities which he visits he is driven out with insults and abuse. Communities which he has only just established fall away from him as soon as he has left them, and turn to "the other gospel." Passionate opponents pursue him from city to city, malign his character, abuse him for an apostate, a heretic, a false apostle, and employ all their arts of persuasion to make his Gentile Christians bow beneath the law of the Jews. Wherever he appears in the synagogues, he soon finds himself driven away as an exile, and he must be glad if only a private house is opened to him. The external results of these missionary labours, measured in proportion to the population of the Gentile cities, are so small as to be scarcely perceptible. After years of labour in the most populous cities, a room of moderate size would contain the whole community; at the best there were, perhaps, several communities meeting in private houses, each in the most favour-

able cases numbering not more than fifty or sixty souls. The majority of these newly-won believers were persons of the humbler classes, slaves and freedmen, small tradespeople, artisans and porters. The servants' rooms and out-buildings, workshops and yards, these were the places where the announcement of the new salvation was first heard. In rare cases, a man of wealth and position would place the garret of his house at the service of the poor Jewish weaver, or some devout Greek lady would allow her slaves and servants, after they had finished the day's work, to gather together in the court-yard or portico and unite in their devotions.

As Jesus' message of the Kingdom had been a gospel for the poor and feeble, so also was the "Word of the Cross" which Paul proclaimed as an "appointed Apostle of Jesus Christ." These lowest strata of society as then constituted were also the scene of the spiritual contests which stirred the primitive Church. Here were discussed the questions of the relation between Jews and Gentiles in the Messianic Kingdom, and the continuance or abolition of the Mosaic Law in Christianity, the questions of circumcision, festivals, fasts, commands relating to clean and unclean meats, sacrificial feasts, and flesh offered to idols, the true function of Christ's death upon the cross in regard to salvation, the questions of justification by faith or by works, of the return of the Lord, the resurrection, the judgment, and future blessedness.

The crisis in Antioch had torn even Barnabas from the side of Paul. The two old comrades in missionary labour go each his own way for the future (Acts xv. 36 sq.). Afterwards they seem to have approached one another again (1 Cor. ix. 6), and Paul endeavoured to keep up a connection with the earlier Apostles in Jerusalem also above the region of opposing convictions, or to re-unite the broken threads. But although such a one as Peter could return after a time to his attitude of reconciliation, the strict party of the Law kept henceforth the upper hand in the primitive community, and from this point as



a centre all the attacks upon the Pauline Gentile mission were conducted according to a systematic plan.

While Barnabas with his nephew Mark returned to Cyprus, Paul sought new companions and new fields of labour (A.D. 53). Of his old comrades of Jewish descent only Silas (or Silvanus), of Jerusalem, and the half-Jew Timothy of Derbe in Lycaonia, had remained faithful to him. The gaps thus made were gradually filled up by Gentiles whom he had himself converted and trained to be companions in his mission. We can to a very considerable extent still follow the expeditions of the Apostle to the Gentiles, under the guidance of a journal which was composed by one of his companions, and of which fragments were afterwards incorporated in the Book of Acts. The journey was directed at first towards Paul's native land of Cilicia, and then by the shortest route through the mountain gorges of Taurus to the province of Galatia. If the Book of Acts is correct (Acts xvi. 6), he then travelled on from Lycaonia into Galatia proper. Hence those commentators who regard the Galatians to whom the Epistle is addressed as the descendants of the Gauls who had settled there, represent the Galatian communities as founded during this journey, and postpone the Apostle's second residence there until the period after the founding of the communities in Greece (Acts xviii. 23). However this may have been, the disputes concerning the Law in any case early penetrated even to these Galatian communities in spite of their Gentile origin, and Paul had some difficulty in maintaining his apostolic position and authority, which were persistently disputed by his Jewish opponents. Hindrances which he reverently regarded as expressions of the will of the Holy Spirit prevented him from setting foot at this time in the province of Asia. He therefore went down to the coast of the Ægean Sea and came to Troas, the port of departure for Europe. A vision in a dream decided him in his resolution to cross the Sea. The founding of the Macedonian communities of Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea, a year and a

half spent in Corinth, where he found work with a fellow-countryman and fellow-craftsman of the name of Aquila, and preached the gospel in the house of a proselyte, Titius Justus, filled up the first period of Paul's labours among the Greeks. Here also some of the communities consisted mainly, and some indeed exclusively, of Gentiles by birth, while his own countrymen here, as everywhere else almost without exception, met him with deadly hostility. The condition and circumstances of these Greek communities, among which Corinth gave the Apostle no less trouble than the "foolish Galatians," are known to us, as are those of the communities in Galatia itself, from Paul's Epistles.

After two years (A.D. 55) the Apostle transferred the scene of his labours to Ephesus, the celebrated capital of the province of Asia. The three years that he spent there form one of the darkest periods of his life. According to the representations of the Book of Acts, before settling there for a stay of some duration he had re-visited Jerusalem, Antioch, and the Asiatic communities. The journey to Jerusalem, however, at any rate is not certain (Acts xviii. 20—22); and, on the other hand, the Book of Acts is silent as to another journey to Greece which probably belongs to this period. Whatever differences of opinion there may be about this, there is no doubt that contests awaited him in Ephesus similar to those which he had experienced in Antioch, Galatia, and Greece. It would seem that the community in Ephesus existed before his arrival, in close connection with the synagogue of the Jews. The result of three months' labour was the separation here also of an independent and continually increasing Gentile community. And yet Ephesus is one of the places where the Pauline gospel appears soon to have been repressed again. At any rate, the Second Epistle to Timothy complains that "they which are in Asia" have all turned away from Paul (2 Tim. i. 15), and the missive of a Jewish-Christian writer to Ephesus can praise the community there for having tried, and found false, those who say that they are Apostles and



are not (Rev. ii. 2). By the middle of the second century the memory of the Apostle to the Gentiles was extinct in Asia.

Towards the close of his residence in Ephesus, Paul passed through serious dangers, which almost culminated in his death. The Book of Acts describes a popular tumult against him in the theatre, though in this account we find no mention of a direct attack upon his life (Acts xix. 29 sqq.). In the Apostle's own letters we have a far more serious picture of this event when he writes, while still in Ephesus, that God has set him forth as one condemned to death, and as a "spectacle to men and angels" (1 Cor. iv. 9), or when he tells us how he "fought with beasts at Ephesus" (1 Cor. xv. 32). According to a third passage, which probably refers to another event, he suffered so seriously from his injuries while still in Asia, that he almost despaired of his life (2 Cor. i. 8—10).

In the spring of the year 58, Paul set out to visit once more his communities in Macedonia and Greece. One object of this journey was to make a collection for the "poor saints" at Jerusalem. But he had also another purpose in view, namely, to restore in person the disturbed peace of the communities, especially the one in Corinth in accordance with the intention which he had more than once declared. The extant Epistles to the Corinthians give us a vivid picture of the shattered state of this troubled, vacillating, frivolous community, divided by various factions; but at the same time they show us that the Apostle finally succeeded in establishing his position and authority, which even here had been violently shaken by emissaries from Jerusalem. He tarried the whole winter in Corinth, and then returned to Macedonia, whence he had come. The collections for the Jewish Christians of the mother community at Jerusalem had proved so successful, that Paul resolved to take the money and hand it over himself, as a practical proof of his unchangeable fidelity to his own people and the brotherly feeling of his Gentile communities, hoping at the same time to reconcile by this work of love the hostile hearts of the Law-zealous fellow-believers in

Jerusalem. From Judea he then intended to go further westwards than his previous journeys had extended, and there to preach the gospel in the first instance among the Romans. In the same peacefully disposed spirit to which he intended the contribution brought to Jerusalem to be a testimony, he announced at this time to the Jewish Christians in Rome his speedy arrival, and expounded to them the principles of his gospel under the guidance of the Holy Scriptures.

After the Easter festival of 59, Paul, with a numerous escort, set out upon his *last journey to Jerusalem*. Not without warning did he enter the holy city, but he was resolved to carry out the duty laid upon him to the end. His reception by James and the mother community was cold; the zealots for the Law regarded him as an apostate. Taken prisoner on occasion of a tumult in the temple and threatened with death, left in the lurch by the Jewish Christians, he owed his life only to the interference of the Roman authorities. Two Roman captains brought him, under a strong escort, to Cæsarea, the seat of the Roman governor Felix, who kept him a prisoner for two whole years. Felix' successor, Porcius Festus, sent him at last (in the autumn of 61) to Rome, because as a Roman citizen he had appealed to the judgment of the emperor. On the voyage he suffered shipwreck, and had to pass the winter in Malta. In the following spring he reached the goal which he had so eagerly desired, and stood at last in the capital of the world—but in chains.

The final fortunes of Paul's life are hidden in obscurity. The Book of Acts concludes with the statement that for two years longer he was allowed to preach the gospel freely, though still a prisoner. The supposition that he was set free, and that there then followed missionary journeys into various countries and extending over several years, then a second Roman imprisonment, and finally the martyr's death, rests not upon ancient tradition, but upon learned conjectures and the misinterpretation of certain passages in the Pauline Epistles. The end of his two years' labours in Rome coincides with the Neronian persecution of the



Christians (in the summer of 64), and to it, according to the unanimous tradition of the ancient Church, Paul fell a victim. Legend has named the 29th of June as the day of his death.

The practical historical importance of the Apostle to the Gentiles rests, above all, on the fact that he established an independent Gentile Church. Although he was not the only nor even the first converter of Gentiles, still it was he who first completed the emancipation of Christianity, as a new religion, from the Mosaic Law and the Jewish national community. This work of his life endures independently of his peculiar theology, which to its full extent was adopted by but few even of his contemporaries, and which since then still fewer have so much as understood. It is only later, and indeed the very latest research that has enabled us again to understand it, by disclosing, together with its inexhaustibly rich religious contents, its historical conditions and limitations also, its processes of thought and demonstrations borrowed from Jewish scholasticism, and finally its connection with the Apostle's own peculiar character and the development of his life. It was just that which was deepest in his teaching that long remained sealed to his contemporaries and to posterity, viz. the new view of the universe constructed upon the opposition between flesh and spirit, law and liberty, sin and grace, which recognizes in the appearance of Christ the manifestation of the second perfect man, or the "Son of God," whose essence is not the natural life of the soul, but the living spirit of God,—recognizes in his death the destruction of sin in the flesh, in his resurrection the new life in the spirit of God, freed from sin and therefore from the Law,—recognizes in belief in the Crucified and Risen the new divinely appointed way of salvation, by which Jews and Gentiles without distinction are set free from the guilt and power of sin and endowed with the spirit of sonship with God, the earnest of future participation in the kingdom of God.

A clear understanding of this world of ideas is rendered difficult, not only by the peculiar forms of thought which belong to the

culture of that age, but still more by its own depth ; and yet the Christian Church at all times, when she has turned her attention again to the consideration of her own true nature, has ever felt herself drawn anew to the Pauline Epistles, and, occupying herself once more with them, has found herself spiritually refreshed. The true key, however, to his doctrine is to be found only in the historical view of his personal religious character, in which the deepest and tenderest feeling was united with an incisive keenness of thought, and an infinitely rich abundance of spiritual life was combined with passionate fire and restless activity.

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Of the *thirteen Epistles* which have come down to us under the name of Paul, the four chief (viz. one to the Galatians, one to the Romans, and the two to the Corinthians), in which we find the picture of his doctrine and his personality most clearly drawn, are of undisputed genuineness. The rest may be divided into two or three groups, according to the greater or less degree of probability of their having been written by the Apostle. The least disputed is the short Epistle to Philemon, together with which most scholars at present also accept the First Epistle to the Thessalonians and the Epistle to the Philippians as genuine documents of the Pauline spirit. On the other hand, what are known as the three Pastoral Epistles, to Timothy and Titus, are demonstrably from a later hand, though perhaps some genuine fragments form the nucleus of the Second Epistle to Timothy. The decisions of scientific criticism at the present time are most divergent in regard to the Epistles to the Colossians and the Ephesians, and also the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians.

[It will be noticed that the Epistle to the Hebrews is not mentioned here. So certain is it that this is not Paul's, that even Luther has placed it after the Epistles of John, simply with the title, "The Epistle to the Hebrews," and hence it is unnecessary for a German commentator even to mention the fact that it is not Paul's.]



## THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

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AMONG the four great Epistles of the Apostle Paul, all of which are indisputably genuine, viz. the Epistle to the Romans, the two Epistles to the Corinthians, and the Epistle to the Galatians, the Epistle to the Romans, from the early days of the Church, has always occupied the most prominent position. The older Protestant theology regarded it as a complete outline of Christian doctrine. And, as a matter of fact, it was from an exposition of this Epistle that the first scientific exposition of evangelical doctrine proceeded.\* Even down to the most recent times, the Epistle, with its exclusively didactic contents, was regarded, not as a venerable and precious historical monument of the spirit and thought of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, but as a kind of theological manual which was only nominally an Epistle to the Romans, thrown by the Apostle into that form, but was really intended by him for the Christians of all ages. Truly Paul has nowhere else set forth his gospel with such completeness as in this Epistle. And if it is no manual of Christian faith in general, it is still the ripest fruit of the Pauline spirit, and represents the peculiar doctrine of the Apostle at the highest point of its development. But just as this doctrine itself was historically conditioned, so the exposition of it, as it is presented to us in the Epistle to the Romans, cannot be placed in a clear light except in distinct connection with the historical relations of the Epistle itself. In a word, it is impossible for us to

\* Melancthon's treatise on the Principles of Theology (*Loci Communes Rerum Theologicarum*, 1521).

understand the contents of the Epistle unless we first understand the circumstances in which it originated, and its relation to the events of its own age.

### 1. THE ORIGIN OF THE PAULINE GOSPEL.

The gospel of Paul, or, as he himself delighted to call it, the "Word of the Cross," not only received its definite didactic form from the *personal experiences* of the Apostle's life, but also had previously originated in those experiences. Brought by the appearance of Christ on the way to Damascus, after severe inner struggles, to the belief in the crucified Messiah, but the crucified Messiah raised from the dead and exalted to heaven, he based upon the two facts of the death upon the cross and the resurrection an entirely new religious system, which soon enough came into sharp conflict with the ideas of the earlier Apostles and the first "Nazarenes."

In that very death of the Messiah upon the cross, which proved the most serious stumbling-block to the Jewish mind, he recognized henceforth the expression of the divine plan of salvation, now first revealed, whereby was to be effected that which it was impossible for the Law to effect because of the weakness and sinfulness of the flesh, viz. the realization of the righteousness of man before God, so that he should be well-pleasing unto God, in a way entirely new and altogether different from that prescribed in the Law. What he had received as the common assertion of Christian faith, "that Christ had died for our sins according to the Scripture," had become the cardinal point of his new religious consciousness. In this saying he had recovered that peace with his God which, with all his zeal for the Law, he had hitherto striven after in vain. From this experience there grew up for him, as he meditated upon the divine plan of salvation revealed upon the cross of Christ, a new theology, which sought to refer the violent reaction in his personal spiritual life to a general divine order, and to explain this order by the gra-



cious purposes of God. The "righteousness" which cannot come from works of the Law, because it is impossible to carnal man to satisfy the Law, is given by grace to them that believe in the Crucified and Risen One. To the "Righteousness of the Law," which again and again proves to be a mere phantom, is opposed the "Righteousness of God," that is to say, the righteousness which God himself imputes to believers, on the ground of the death of Christ upon the cross. By this new plan of salvation, the Mosaic Law as a way of salvation is superseded. Inasmuch as no one can be made righteous by the Law at all, the forgiveness of sins which is imparted through the death of Christ cannot be merely *supplementary* to our imperfect fulfilment of the Law, so that believers should still be bound by the Law. Salvation, i.e. righteousness before God and future blessedness in the Messianic kingdom, is rather a pure gift of grace, is solely the work of God, and man only receives it in faith. Henceforth, to turn back again and seek righteousness from the works of the Law is equivalent to a rejection of grace and a declaration that the death of the Messiah upon the cross was in vain, and that the redemption has never taken place at all. But if the Law has been done away with in Christianity, then at the same time the partition-wall has been broken down which hitherto has separated Jews from Gentiles. The promises of God, which were borne by Israel as the people of the covenant, are in no way dependent upon the fulfilment of the Law, for the Law was altogether incapable of giving life, and therefore it was not the divine intention that it should do so. But if it is only the grace of God revealed upon the cross of Christ that gives salvation, then there is no longer any distinction between Jew and Gentile. The superiority of Israel rests simply upon the assumption of his fidelity to the Law. But if this assumption turns out to be incorrect, and therefore in sin there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles, then the divine grace also can henceforth make no distinction. Each one who is baptized into Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, becomes a participator in the divine grace by faith and baptism, and is

called to sonship with God and to the inheritance of the Messianic salvation. The place of the Israelitish national community is thus taken by the community of believers, in which Jews and Gentiles are alike members having equal rights. What unites the members of this community is solely faith in the crucified and risen Son of God. Hence the "Word of the Cross" is at the same time the manifestation of the Son of God among the Gentiles; the calling of Paul to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ is at the same time his calling to be an Apostle to the Gentiles; the gospel, the proclamation of which is committed to him, is the gospel of the free grace of God in Christ, which calls into the blessedness of the Messianic kingdom Jews and Gentiles without the works of the Law, solely on the ground of faith in the Crucified and Risen Christ.

## 2. THE APOSTLE'S OPPONENTS AND THEIR ATTACKS.

In taking account in this way of the divine purpose of the cross of Christ, Paul reached a conception which stood in the sharpest opposition to the older Jewish Christianity. It is true that the first "Nazarenes," no less than Paul himself, removed the offence which Judaism found in a crucified Messiah, by the supposition that the death of the Messiah upon the cross was a death of atonement for the sins of the people. The thought of a vicarious sacrifice was founded indeed deep in the Old Testament system. The transference of this idea to the death of the Messiah upon the cross was with the first Apostles a matter of course, and it was subsequently justified by such passages as Is. liii. The imputation of this vicarious atonement to believers was also a conception which lay altogether within the Old Testament circle of ideas. But this by no means involved for them the abrogation of the Law, and a complete breach with ordinances which were valid in the national community of Israel. On the contrary, according to their idea, the validity of the Law was actually implied in the sacrificial death of the Messiah, just as it



was in the Old Testament sacrificial system. Accordingly, the imputation of the forgiveness of sins resulting from that sacrifice was intended to be in the hand of God the means of rendering possible from henceforth a better fulfilment of the Law than that of the other Jews. Naturally from this point of view the whole of the ordinances given to the people of Israel in the Law remained as indefeasible as ever. As the Law itself was the revelation of the divine will to Israel, no distinction could be made within its domain between moral and ceremonial provisions. Circumcision, the ancient sign of the covenant of the people of God, was still maintained in the community of the believers in the Messiah, just the same as all the other provisions of the Mosaic ceremonial, commands regarding meats, the law of the Sabbath, the appointment of the Jewish festivals. The transgression of these provisions was still regarded as an offence against the divine will proclaimed in the Law. In this case, however, the relation of the Gentiles to the Messianic community could only be decided by the directions of the Law and the utterances of the prophets. To their admission the condition was still attached that they should then completely fulfil the Law. The promises of God in the Old Testament were not for all men without distinction, but only for the Israelitish people of the Covenant. For the fulfilment of the promises given to this people, Jesus of Nazareth had come as the Messiah of Israel. For this people the Crucified had established an expiation of sins committed. Hence there could be no admission of the Gentiles except on the assumption that they were first received as members of the people of the Covenant. As, indeed, even in the times of the fathers some remission of the full strictness of the duties required by the Law had been accorded to the "strangers in the gates of Israel," so a similar remission was granted also to the strangers ("proselytes") who now joined the Messianic community; but then in that case they remained strangers, enjoying the protection, but having no claim to the full citizenship, of the kingdom that had been prepared for Israel. When the Messiah

should return to establish his kingdom, they would at most only be admitted to the forecourts of his sanctuary.

It was impossible that such contradictory views of the death of Christ upon the cross should not give occasion to the most violent disputes whenever they came into collision in the Christian communities. To the Jewish Christians, the Gentile mission emancipated from the Law was a wanton attack upon the dearest hopes of Israel, a denial of the promises of God given to the people of the Covenant, a rebellion against the divine will clearly and plainly expressed in the Law.

Truly the new gospel offered very many points of attack. In the first place, the converter of the Gentiles, so far from being one of the twelve Apostles of Jesus Christ called for the twelve tribes of Israel, was not even a personal disciple of the Master. And, as if this was not enough, his doctrine stood in the sharpest opposition to what the personal disciples of the Lord proclaimed as the genuine gospel of Jesus. Nowhere had Jesus himself preached the abolition of the Law. On the contrary, according to the account given by his disciples, he had said that not a letter of the Law should perish. Never had Jesus, according to the earliest tradition, commanded his disciples to go unto the Gentiles. On the contrary, so they said, he had forbidden to them the way of the Gentiles and the streets of the Samaritans, and expressly sent them only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The appearance of Christ to which Paul appealed could, in their eyes, no more supply the want of apostolic authority, than the "inner revelation of the Son of God," of which the messenger to the Gentiles boasted, could outweigh the established reputation of those who had enjoyed the personal instruction and directions of the Messiah. Moreover, the new doctrine stood in opposition to the sacred documents of the divine revelation to Israel. The more zealously Paul himself sought to prove the right of his gospel from the "Law," i.e. from the Old Testament Scriptures, the more wanton such an interpretation of the sacred Scriptures, which read in them the very opposite to all that had



hitherto been regarded as ascertained divine truth, must necessarily have appeared to the Jewish Christians. To declare that the Law was done away with and circumcision rejected, to pronounce the sabbaths, festivals, commands regarding meats, and all the sacred usages of the people without distinction, to be poor and meagre ordinances from which Christ had set us free, to take away all the value of the promises which had been given as their own peculiar possession to the people of the Covenant—this seemed indeed to be the most barefaced denial of the divine word in the Old Testament, which only in mockery could parade itself as a deeper understanding of that divine word itself.

And, again, considered from the point of view of religious morals, the doctrine of Paul could not but appear an abominable doctrine to the Jewish Christians. If “righteousness” no longer came from the works of the Law, but from faith alone, the door was thrown wide open to Gentile licentiousness. The abolition of the Law appeared to break down every moral barrier by which the “saints of God” were separated from the “sinners of the Gentiles.” The bold assertion that the Law had only been given in order to multiply transgressions until the time of grace was come, wounded most deeply not only the religious, but also the simply moral sense of the Jewish Christians. If they accepted from the mouth of Paul the saying that where sin was powerful grace revealed itself the more gloriously, the blasphemous conclusion it seemed was clear: Let us then do evil that good may come from God; let us sin that grace may become more abundant.

It is to these and similar objections that Paul replies in his *Epistle to the Romans*. In ceaseless contests with his Jewish-Christian opponents, he had now developed his gospel on all sides. But scandalous as this gospel appeared to his fellow-believers from Israel, his heart still beat warmly for his own people, and he had no more earnest care than to dispel the misunderstandings which attached to his doctrine, to remove the offences which they caused to the Jewish mind, and to bring nearer to his fellow-countrymen of Israel that “Word of the

Cross" which was to him the incontestable expression of the divine plan of salvation. At the very time when he wrote the Epistle to the Romans (in the spring of the year 59 A.D.), Paul was preparing for a journey to Jerusalem, in order that he might hand over personally to the "poor saints" of the mother community the great collection, the result of the work of love that had been going on for years in his Gentile communities, the practical proof of his unchanged fidelity to his own people. From Jerusalem he intended then to proceed to Rome, in order that he might bring a "spiritual gift" to the Christian community there.

### 3. THE READERS TO WHOM THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS IS ADDRESSED.

The substance and the form of the Epistle itself show us what the Apostle means by his "spiritual gift." He means the deeper knowledge of the death of Christ upon the cross, and so of the "Righteousness of God," which he preaches in opposition to the Righteousness of the Law. This knowledge, however, the Apostle seeks to impart to readers of *Jewish education* and of the *Jewish-Christian school*.

A closer consideration of the *method of proof* which the Apostle follows in the Epistle, decides at once the much-disputed question as to the class of readers which he has in view. Everything from first to last is calculated for Jewish Christians. For them is intended the argument that the Law, circumcision, and the promises given to the fathers, can establish no superiority of the Jews to the Gentiles in the Messianic kingdom. In order to humble Jewish pride, it is further pointed out how there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles; how, rather, both alike are under the dominion of sin; and hence grace also makes no distinction between Jews and Gentiles. And similarly the exposition of the "righteousness of God" could only be intelligible to the Jewish-Christian mind. The establishment of this righteousness by the example of Abraham and by quotations from the



Old Testament, the comparison between the transmission of Adam's sin to the whole succeeding race of men, and the transmission, which Paul teaches, of the righteousness of Christ to all believers, the indication of the comparatively subordinate and only temporary position assigned to the Mosaic Law in the religious history of mankind—all this is unmeaning unless addressed to Jewish Christians. The Epistle is further intended to meet Jewish-Christian objections, when it shows that the abolition of the religion of the Law by no means necessarily leads to a life of heathen impurity; that, on the contrary, it is precisely to those who are baptized into the death of Christ upon the cross that the spirit of the risen Christ is also given, which gives them the power now at last really to fulfil the moral requirements of the Law which were incapable of being fulfilled under the dominion of the Law itself. And, finally, it is Jewish-Christian suspicions that the Apostle wishes to allay when he shows that Israel has no right to complain of the unrestricted entrance of so many Gentiles into the Messianic community, that the people has not on this account been deceived as to the promises of God which were given to it,—yea, that, on the contrary, the Gentile mission itself is the means, in God's hands, of bringing the Jews to faith, and thus, finally, of bringing all, both Jews and Gentiles, to the salvation of the Messianic kingdom. Indeed, the first object, even of that which is incidentally put before the Gentile Christians for their consideration (xi. 13 sqq.), is really to calm the minds of Jewish-Christian readers.

The *form* of the Epistle also, like the matter of it, can only be understood on the supposition that Paul had Jewish-Christian readers especially in view. The Apostle not only himself makes use of those forms of thought which are characteristic of the Jewish mind, but he assumes throughout that he is addressing readers of Jewish education who are also accustomed to the Jewish methods. The hypotheses from which he sets out, the conceptions with which he works, the arguments from the maxims and examples of the Old Testament Scripture, the express appeal

to the readers' knowledge of the Law—all this is only intelligible if the Apostle wishes to influence the Jewish-Christian mind.

That the community in Rome did not consist *exclusively* of Jewish Christians, is clear indeed from various passages in the Epistle itself (xi. 13 sqq., comp. i. 13 sqq.). But if, nevertheless, everything is here calculated for the Jewish-Christian mind alone, the Pauline gospel, at any rate, can have had few if any adherents at that time in Rome, and no doubt even those believers who had been gathered from among the Gentiles were altogether under the influence of the Jewish spirit.

Having reached this point, we may now draw a conclusion as to the *origin* of the Christian community in Rome. It was neither directly nor indirectly founded by Paul. On the other hand, though the later legend, which makes *Peter* its founder and first bishop, is certainly as unhistorical as possible, and in all probability the foot of the Apostle Peter never touched the ground of the imperial capital, there is, nevertheless, a fact underlying this supposition, viz. that the Roman community bore originally a *Petrine*, i.e. a Jewish-Christian, stamp,—a stamp that was not essentially altered even by the fact that Paul himself preached for some time in Rome. Probably, then, the community was first formed among the numerous Jewish settlers in Rome, who kept up an uninterrupted intercourse with Jerusalem. Roman Jews who came into contact with the Messianic community in Jerusalem, or Jews who on their travels came from Jerusalem and proclaimed in the Roman synagogues the tidings of the appearance of the Messiah, first laid the foundation of the Christian community there. From the Roman writer Suetonius we still possess an account of the violent excitement which the tidings of Christ produced among the Jews in Rome. It gave occasion to the emperor Claudius to issue a decree of expulsion against the Jews, in consequence of the "riots" which it caused; a decree, indeed, which it was found impossible to carry out. When, on the other hand, we find that, according to the Book of Acts, the Jews in Rome at the time of Paul's arrival had heard



nothing whatever about him, either by letters from Jerusalem or oral information (Acts xxviii. 21), we can only say that what is there asserted is simply an historical impossibility.

#### 4. OCCASION AND PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE.

The circle of readers for which our Epistle is intended and the form of its Christian thought being defined, the occasion and purpose of the missive are established at the same time. From Corinth, where Paul had passed the winter of 58-59, he announces to the Romans in this Epistle his speedy arrival among them. While he promises them in his Epistle that he will then bring them a "spiritual gift," the Epistle itself already affords them one in fullest measure. Desiring to prepare beforehand a friendly reception for himself among the Jewish Christians in Rome, he attempts in a detailed exposition of his gospel to reconcile it with the Jewish-Christian thoughts and feelings of his readers. The purpose of the Epistle, then, is thoroughly to explain and justify his missionary proceedings by setting forth the righteousness of God as he understands it, based upon the death of Christ upon the cross, in such a way as may lead to an understanding with his countrymen in Rome who believe in the Messiah, but are still strictly attached to the Mosaic Law.

#### 5. DOCTRINE.

The statement of Pauline doctrine in the Epistle to the Romans is distinguished from the discussion in the Epistle to the Galatians, not only by the absence of any personal relation between the Apostle and his readers, but also more especially by the thorough development of that series of ideas of which only the germs appear in his earlier writings. In the first five chapters, the Apostle writes from a strictly Jewish point of view, in order that he may, as it were, lead the Jewish mind beyond itself by means of its own forms of thought. Though his denial

of any pre-eminence whatever on the part of the Jews over the Gentiles is so decided, and the sharp contrast he makes between the "Righteousness which is of God" and the righteousness which comes from the "works of the Law," could not but be most offensive to the Jewish-Christian mind; yet the arguments which the Apostle here uses are Jewish from first to last. The Jewish Christian must allow that the possession of the Law, of circumcision and of the promises of God, does not in itself avail the people at all, inasmuch as he is compelled to admit the fact that no one really fulfils the Law, and therefore the possession of it, far from leading to righteousness by works, only convicts the transgressors of sin before God, and renders them consciously liable to punishment at his hands. The conception, too, of imputed righteousness, of faith which God reckons as righteousness, of the sacrifice of reconciliation which God has appointed as the vindication of his justice—all these are thoughts which had sprung up upon Jewish ground. And it is only the conclusions which the Apostle draws—justification from faith without the works of the Law, the equal justification of Gentiles and Jews, the argument that Abraham was justified before he was circumcised, the sharp contrast between law and promise, and the rejection of the Law as capable only of working wrath and not of bringing the Messianic inheritance—it is only these that are opposed to the Jewish-Christian consciousness.

Not till the conception of the "Righteousness which is of faith" is established, does the Apostle proceed to develop what is most profound in his gospel and most peculiar to it. The very conclusions which he draws from premisses already universally allowed in the Christian Church, lead him on further. The *fact* that the Law is not fulfilled, presents itself to him as the *impossibility* of fulfilling the Law; and the fact that the Law only leads the transgressor to the recognition of his guilt, represents itself as the divine purpose of bringing hidden sin to light through the Law. The reason, however, for this impossibility of fulfilling the Law, he finds in a necessity of our nature, in the



“carnality” (fleshliness) which constitutes the nature of mankind as descended from Adam, and in the power which sin necessarily exercises over the “flesh.” The flesh as opposed to the spirit appears to him as quickened matter which, because it has not the spirit of God, is necessarily subject to evil. Evil is to him a power ruling over the carnal man, who by his very nature is given up to the lusts of the flesh and is powerless against them; the Law is the spur of sin which arouses the desire of transgression; and in spite of the resistance of the inner man, who delights in God’s commandment, evil ever seizes new occasion from the Law to make man the slave of sin.

From this point of view it is neither possible, nor is it even intended, that the Law should be fulfilled by carnal man, and it ceases to be an inviolable divine ordinance. Law and sin are interchangeable notions. For man, who is by nature forfeit to sin, experiences the Law only as a hostile power, which by its commands arouses the inner contradiction in his flesh, increases the multitude of his sins, and condemns the transgressor to death without showing him a means of deliverance.

It is not till this point is reached that the death of Christ upon the cross attains its true significance. While to the faith of all alike it is a *sacrifice of reconciliation* for sin, ordained by God himself, Paul finds involved in this traditional idea the profounder thought that the death of the Messiah has broken the power of sin in the flesh, inasmuch as in the death of his flesh he slew sin. The opposition between flesh and spirit, as two mutually opposing powers, which the Apostle has already set forth in the Epistle to the Galatians, now takes the form of opposition between two great periods of human history. The first period, which originated with the first Adam, the carnal man, is under the dominion of the flesh, the dominion of sin and death. In the second period, which begins with the second Adam, the spiritual man from heaven, the flesh and sin are dead, and thereby the Law has received satisfaction, and in its place the new life in the Spirit of God has been brought to light,

the life which, at the resurrection of the "Sons of God," will be completely unveiled. The "spiritual man," Christ, the heavenly Son of God, came down to earth in order that he might take to himself sinful flesh and destroy it upon the cross. But once dead unto sin, Christ dies no more. Raised from the dead by the "glory" of the Father, he lives a new life in the shining heavenly body upon which the Law has no longer any claim, because sin has been destroyed at the same time as the flesh. And believers enter by baptism into mysterious communion with the crucified and risen Christ. In baptism into his death their flesh has been crucified and buried with Christ. The iron necessity of sin is broken down for them; and as they have died unto sin, so also they have died unto the Law, which only enslaves and condemns the carnal and sinful man. Again, as Christ has risen from the dead, so also the believers have risen to a new life "in the spirit of Christ." The baptism of water is at the same time a baptism of the spirit. To him who has been baptized in the name of Christ, not only has the death of Christ been counted as his own death, so that freedom from subjection to the Law has been given to him as his own possession; he has at the same time been anointed with the "spirit of the Son of God," called to sonship with the Father, and through the spirit of God implanted within him he is made, in the proper sense of the word, a new creature, able to destroy the works of the flesh, to make the members of the body instruments of righteousness, and, though free from the Law, to fulfil the moral demands of the Law in a new conduct of life in the spirit.

This line of thought lays the foundation of a completely new system, which, as it were, forms a bridge between Jewish and Greek, ancient and modern ideas. The place of the religion of the Law has been taken by the new religion of the Spirit of God. The great antitheses of flesh and spirit thrust the Old Testament ideas one after the other into the background. In the place of the free choice of the individual, which from the legal point of view was a matter of course as the only ground of



personal guilt or personal merit before God, we find the sway of a natural necessity of evil in carnal man which could not previously be overcome, but which has now been destroyed in the spiritual man by the power of the divine spirit. This revolution in the history of humanity takes place upon the cross of the Son of God, who, from being the Messiah of the Jews, has become the Redeemer of mankind. The satisfaction of the Law by the death of Christ is at the same time the abolition of the whole religion of the Law. The expiating death of the Messiah, which has been appointed by the grace of God, is the destruction of the power of sin in the flesh which the Heavenly Man has taken upon him. To the justification which is promised to the believer, by the grace of God alone without any merit on his own part, is added the implanting of the spirit of Christ as a new power of life in those who are baptized.

It may still be a matter for discussion, how far these different lines of thought are consistent with one another. If in the Epistle to the Romans they are more definitely distinguished from one another than before, it does not follow that to the Apostle's own mind they were mutually exclusive. Involuntarily the one passes into the other, until the open position has been gained, where the historical religious consciousness of Israel retires completely behind the newly-attained view. Thus the Epistle to the Romans contains the last and ripest form of the Pauline theology—a well-arranged and firmly-constructed doctrinal system, the understanding of which only appears so difficult because the origin and development of the thoughts contained in it are seldom traced back to their ultimate roots.

## 6. ARRANGEMENT.

The arrangement of the different sections of the Epistle corresponds with its purpose of offering to Jewish-Christian readers a justification of the Pauline gospel to the Gentiles. The kernel of the Epistle is contained in the first eleven chapters, and this first part again falls into two rather unequal divisions. The first

division (i.—viii.) proves the religious right of the Gentile mission free from the Law by the exhibition and establishment of the “Righteousness of God,” in opposition to the supposed Righteousness from the Law. The second division (ix.—xi.) seeks to remove the contradiction between the practical result of the Pauline mission to the Gentiles and the religious ideas of the Old Testament.

The first division falls, again, into two sub-divisions. After the introduction (i. 1—15) and the statement of the theme (i. 16, 17), Paul proceeds immediately to approve the “Righteousness of God,” revealed upon the cross of Christ, to the *religious* consciousness of the Jewish Christians (i. 18—v. 21). This he does, in preparation for what afterwards follows, by showing that as a matter of fact both Gentiles and Jews are equally incapable of becoming righteous before God by their own works, and so at the same time disputing every supposed superiority of the Jews (i. 18—iii. 20). He shows, first of the Gentile portion of humanity (i. 18—32), then of the Jewish (ii. 1—iii. 20), that by their unpardonable iniquity they have fallen under the divine wrath. The Apostle then passes on to the statement of the substance of his gospel, developing, in opposition to the supposed righteousness from the Law, the *nature* of the “Righteousness of God” which is imparted by the expiating death of Christ, and given by grace to all believers (iii. 21—26). In the next place he proves from the nature of this “Righteousness of God,” or righteousness from faith, the equal rights of the believing Gentiles with the believing Jews (iii. 27—30); and then he proves this equal righteousness of faith for Jews and Gentiles from the Law itself, especially by the history of Abraham, the ancestor of Israel according to the flesh (iii. 31—iv. 25). Finally, in setting forth the *result* of the “Righteousness from faith,” viz. peace and reconciliation with God, established by the death of the Son of God, the Apostle shows, at the same time, that with this very reconciliation the believers have also been made participators in the hope both of future deliverance from the judg-



ment which threatens transgressors of the Law and also of life in the Messianic kingdom; a hope which is assured to them by the *life* of the risen Son of God (v. 1—11). An historical foundation of the new religious system, as the issue of the whole previous discussion, forms the conclusion of the first sub-division, a practical demonstration of the principle of the divine order of salvation, whereby righteousness and life, no less than formerly sin and death, are transferred from the one to the many without any co-operation of their own (v. 12—19). In this universal historical survey, the Law only retains the significance of a temporary institution, between the time of Adam and the time of Christ, simply intended to increase sin (v. 20, 21).

In the second sub-division (vi.—viii.), this new system is defended from the *moral* objections which the Jewish consciousness raises against it, and accordingly the moral side of the conception of righteousness and life through Jesus Christ is still further developed. In the first place, it is shown that by the very baptism into the death of Christ, in which is completed the transference of the death of Christ to them, and so the death of their own “flesh,” those who have been baptized therein have themselves died unto sin that they might henceforth live with the risen Christ; and that the power of sin over them has therefore been destroyed in baptism. Thus the false inferences of Jewish Christianity are self-confuted (vi. 1—14); for, from the very time when the believers ceased to be under the Law, the place of subjection to sin has been taken by the “service of righteousness,” the service of the risen Christ, which is a service of the spirit and not of the letter, and therefore the divine gift of grace communicated through Jesus Christ leads to eternal life, just as sin, which is made effective by the Law, leads to death (vi. 14—vii. 6). Although the Law is holy and good, yet sin takes occasion from the Law to excite man to transgression and to bring death upon him. For by virtue of his fleshly nature man has been sold under the dominion of sin and must obey it, against his own better knowledge and will. From this servitude,

however, emancipation from this fleshly body, which is subject to death, has delivered us through Jesus Christ (vii. 7—25). Then follows the exposition of the new order of life into which the baptized have entered by the gift of the spirit, which has been imparted to them in baptism at the same time with the imputed righteousness. Those who have died with Christ unto sin have been raised by the spirit of the risen Christ to a new life in the spirit, in which the moral demands of the Law are actually fulfilled. And this same possession of the spirit is at the same time the pledge of their future resurrection (viii. 1—13). By this spirit, namely, they are sons of God and heirs of future glory (viii. 14—30). At the same time it is also shown that those who have become participators in the imputed righteousness and life in the spirit of Christ are actually exempt from condemnation before the Law; and being already in loving communion with Christ, and through Christ with God, they can no more be robbed of the glory of the future life (viii. 31—39).

In the second division of the first part of the Epistle the Apostle applies himself to the task, which is required both by the disposition of his readers and his own feelings (ix. 1—5), of removing the offence which the practical result of the Pauline-Gentile mission gave to the Jewish-Christian mind. The fact that, instead of the whole nation of Israel, only a fragment, mixed with a large number of Gentiles, has been called to the Messianic salvation, appears to undermine the promise of God. In opposition to this, the Apostle seeks to make the undeniable fact intelligible on the ground of the almighty will of God and His order of salvation. In the first place, he rejects the Jewish conception of the promise given to the people of Israel (ix. 6—29). Hence he first shows that that promise by no means refers to all who belong by natural descent to the people of Israel, but simply to those who are chosen by God's free almighty will (ix. 6—13), and he rejects every human objection to this almighty will as absolutely unjustified (ix. 14—21). He then makes the application of this to the case in point with a reference to the Old Testament Scrip-



ture, which has already foretold the calling of the Gentiles and the deliverance of a remnant only of the people (ix. 22—29). Then he comprehends the actual fact that the Gentiles have been called and the Jews rejected, from the nature of the saving will of God itself, according to which "righteousness" is to proceed, not from the Law, but from faith (ix. 30—xi. 10). This saving will the Gentiles have obeyed, but the Jews have not. The latter, indeed, instead of obeying it, have taken offence at Christ, and therefore, with all their zeal for God, have not perceived that righteousness from faith has taken the place of the Law (ix. 30—x. 4). While the Law preaches righteousness from works, the righteousness of faith demands faith in the Messiah descended from heaven and arisen from the dead (x. 5—10). This faith is to make all without distinction, both Jews and Gentiles, righteous, and therefore has been preached unto all (x. 11—15). It is not, therefore, because of its ignorance, but because of its disobedience to the saving will of God, that Israel has failed to attain salvation (x. 16—21). Hence God has not, as some might suppose, rejected his people, but He has graciously chosen for Himself a remnant of the people. The rest have not obtained what they strove for, because perception of the saving will of God was closed to them (xi. 1—10).

But while, according to this, both belief and unbelief have their source in the counsel of God, this counsel itself is finally referred to the divine order of salvation, in which the exclusion of the Jews appears as a temporary means to attain the final end, namely, the salvation of all (xi. 11—36). The fall of Israel has become the salvation of the Gentiles, as conversely the calling of the Gentiles is to excite Israel to imitation (xi. 11, 12). Let the Gentiles be careful, then, not to be overboastful of the salvation which has befallen them (xi. 13—24). The solution of the difficulty is found, therefore, in the ultimate purpose of the saving will of God, viz. that all, both Jews and Gentiles alike, should finally appear as disobedient, in order that all might owe their deliverance simply to the pitying grace of

God (xi. 25—32); an argument which is finally wound up by the praise of the wonderful ways of divine wisdom (xi. 33—36).

To this exposition and justification of the Pauline gospel is added in the second part of the Epistle a series of special exhortations and warnings occasioned by the circumstances of the community at Rome (xii.—xiv.) The general exhortation to walk according to the light they have attained, for the sake of the mercy they have experienced, culminates at once in a warning against self-exaltation, inasmuch as all are members of the same body. Each should serve the whole with the spiritual gift entrusted to him. Each, in true brotherly love, in showing to every other the respect due to him, in brotherly sympathy and assistance, in concord, peaceableness, placability, gentleness even towards enemies, must fulfil the will of God (xii. 1—21). Then follows the admonition to obedience to the Gentile rulers (xiii. 1—7); and then the Apostle, passing on from the general thought that one ought to pay to every man the honour due to him, immediately returns again to the recommendation of brotherly love as the true fulfilment of the Law (xiii. 8—10), and he justifies this demand by pointing out the approaching dawn of the Messianic kingdom (xiii. 11—14). The Epistle concludes with an application of the general exhortation to mutual love and tolerance, to the special position of the community in Rome, and particularly to the relation between the “strong” and the “weak” in the faith, the latter of whom regard the eating of flesh or drinking of wine as defiling, and make a distinction between holy and profane days. The former are required not to despise the latter, and the latter are warned not to judge the former, since in this matter each one must follow his own conscientious personal conviction, and must only take care that all he does be done in the service of the Lord and for the edification of the community of Christ. But if a brother be induced to act against his own conviction, then he is led away to sin (xiv. 1—23). Probably by those who are “weak” we are not to understand the Jewish-Christian readers of the Epistle generally, but members of the



society of *Essenes*, who had been converted to the Messianic faith, and who can certainly only have formed a minority of the Christian community in Rome.

The two last chapters form an appendix, which there are serious difficulties in the way of accepting as having originally belonged to the Epistle to the Romans. At the beginning it appears to be only a continuation of the previous line of thought (xv. 1—7); but it soon goes back to the general question of the relation between Jews and Gentiles (xv. 8—13). It then proceeds to excuse the over-bold language of the Epistle, and provides against any misunderstanding that might arise from the impression that Paul intended to come to Rome as a teacher, saying that he only means to pay a passing visit there (xv. 14—32). The conclusion consists of commendations, greetings, a parenthetic warning against false teachers, and a benediction (xvi. 1—27).

With the exception of the two last chapters, the genuineness of the Epistle is beyond all doubt, and as yet has never been questioned by any one.

## THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

### i. 1—7. *Address and Greeting.*

IN accordance with Greek epistolary style, the name of the person who sends the salutation stands first, then the persons to whom the letter is addressed, and finally the salutation (ver. 7). Here the sender of the greeting describes himself at considerable length. Paul calls himself first a *servant of Christ Jesus*, i.e. a man who is concerned, in the whole work of his life, not with his own honour, but with the service of the Messiah Jesus. Then he adds, as a more exact definition of his calling, "an appointed apostle, separated to preach the gospel of God" (comp. Gal. i. 1, 11 sq., 15 sq.). Paul's rank as an apostle was the very thing that the Jewish Christians disputed (see *Intro.* to this Ep.) The utmost they would allow him was the name of a "teacher of the Gentiles." The more emphatically, therefore, does Paul here assert, with a distinct view to his Jewish-Christian readers, that he is by special divine appointment a genuine apostle, with an authority fully equal to that of the twelve. *Gospel of God* is the joyful message that comes from God. It signifies not simply the news of the Messiah having appeared, but of the Messiah crucified and risen from the dead, and of the "righteousness of God" imparted to us by his death on the cross.

1. *Jesus Christ*, should be "Christ Jesus." *Called to be an apostle*, should be "an appointed apostle."

2—6. The contents of this gospel are more closely defined. In the first place (ver. 2), Paul emphasizes the fact that to those who are acquainted with the sacred writings of the Old Testament there should be nothing strange in this gospel, since God has in fact announced it by his prophets.

2. *In the holy scriptures*, should be "in sacred writings."

3, 4. Read, "Concerning his Son who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and constituted Son of God with



power (strictly in power, i.e. in a miraculous manner) according to the spirit of holiness, in consequence of his resurrection from the dead, namely, Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom," &c.—The substance of this gospel, which has been promised before by God, is the *Son of God*. He is in his earthly and human manifestation "Son of David," but in his higher nature "Son of God." Hence the two designations, Son of David and Son of God, are related to one another as lower and higher. He is the former "according to the flesh," the latter "according to the spirit." We have here the contrast contained in a two-fold mode of existence of the Son of God,—a lower which he has assumed, although it is foreign to his nature, and a higher which belongs to his nature, and with which (in distinction from his existence "in the flesh") he has been invested since, or in consequence of, his resurrection. But these two modes of existence are not related to one another simply as a "human nature" and a "divine nature," but as the earthly humanity to the heavenly. In opposition to the Jewish-Christian conception, in which "Son of God" is simply a title of honour given to the Messiah, who is earthly and human, but endowed with the Spirit of God, Paul regards the earthly and human appearance of the Messiah only as the vesture assumed by his super-terrestrial or heavenly personality. The "Son of God" was "born (strictly, *became*) [E.V. "was made"] of the seed of David according to the flesh." He assumed the earthly human form of existence only temporarily and as a thing altogether foreign to him (comp. Rom. viii. 3; Gal. iv. 4; 2 Cor. viii. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 47). Hence that which is to the Jewish Christians the highest sign of the Messiah—his descent from David's royal race—is to Paul only the lower manifestation of a far higher personality. He is David's son only "according to the flesh." But "flesh" and "spirit" are standing antitheses. The former denotes properly the body of man as animated matter; hence the earthly and, as such, temporary existence of man generally, which has its natural basis in the animated body. The latter denotes, not the spirit of man as opposed to the perishable body, but the spirit of God, which as a super-terrestrial Ego must first be implanted from above in the natural carnal man in order to render him capable of imperishable life. But while earthly men are by nature flesh, the heavenly

man, Christ (comp. 1 Cor. xv. 47), is by nature spirit. The former only *become* sons of God by the implanting of the "holy spirit." The latter *is* Son of God by nature, "according to the spirit of holiness," which means, not the spirit which makes holy, but the spirit, the essential nature of which is holiness.—"And constituted son of God," &c. : The miraculous power of God has awakened from the dead Jesus Christ the crucified ; and he is thereby actually invested with Sonship to God, which is the natural right of the heavenly man, inasmuch as now at last having laid aside again his earthly, fleshly body, he gives tangible evidence of his spiritual nature to the believers, as the Risen, and makes himself known to them as the "Lord." As such he had appeared to the twelve and likewise to Paul in a shining heavenly body.—*Jesus Christ our Lord* : The name Jesus stands first here (whereas we have "Christ Jesus" in ver. 1) because the apostle is speaking of the historical personality in which the eternal Son of God appeared. But Jesus Christ is not *our Lord* until he has arisen from the dead. "Lord" is the standing periphrasis for the name of God in the Old Testament. Paul was the first to select this word to denote him in whom the nature of God, i.e. "the spirit of holiness," has been personally revealed to us, and through whom this same nature has been imparted (in baptism) to the believers also.

5. *For obedience to the faith* [lit. for obedience of faith] : i.e. "in order to establish the obedience of the faith." From the description of the person of him with whom the gospel deals, Paul now turns back to the thought contained in ver. 1 ; that he has been called to proclaim this gospel. Through this Lord himself, Paul, just as much as the other apostles, has received "grace and apostleship." By the word "apostleship," the special grace which had fallen upon him is at once exactly defined. But the divine purpose of his endowment with the apostolic power which is given by the grace of God is to establish "obedience of faith," i.e. obedience which consists in faith, among all people. Faith in the gospel is in its very nature obedience in regard to the divine plan of salvation revealed in Jesus Christ.—*Among all nations* : Gentiles and Jews without distinction, because the earthly human descent is a matter of indifference in view of the divine plan of salvation. From his call to be an



apostle of Jesus Christ to all nations, Paul derives (ver. 13) his obligation to preach the gospel to the "nation of the Romans" also. But any one who would infer from this that our Epistle was therefore designed especially for Gentile Christians, would ignore the fact that the mixed composition of the Roman community at that time of Jews and Gentiles could not in any way alter Paul's commission to preach to the Roman nation.—*For his name*: so that his name may be acknowledged by them also. The name of Jesus Christ is his name of *Lord*, by virtue of which he is the object of faith.

6. Read, "Among which (nations) ye also are called ones of Jesus Christ's;" i.e. Ye also are persons who have been called from their number, and belong to Jesus Christ, and hence are made participators in the salvation which is imparted through him. The recipients of the Epistle are purposely treated, in spite of their Jewish customs, simply as Romans.

7. Read, "To all the beloved of God that are in Rome, saints who have been called," &c. This verse must be taken in immediate connection with ver. 1. It names the recipients of the letter, and contains the opening salutation. The Epistle is addressed, not to all Romans, but to all the beloved of God and called saints, i.e. to all believers, who are in Rome. *Beloved of God* are those who have experienced the reconciling love of God in Christ (Rom. v. 5), and they receive the name of saints, not because they are morally perfect, but because through baptism in Christ they have been consecrated and dedicated to God. In a similar sense the name of the Holy People is given to the people of Israel in the Old Testament, inasmuch as it is consecrated to the God of the Covenant, as his possession.—*Grace to you*, &c.: The apostolic blessing, in which the Greek and the Oriental salutations are combined, and a deeper meaning is put into them. *Grace* is the divine favour which grants, maintains and increases the true spiritual welfare, the spiritual possessions of the divine kingdom. *Peace* is the peace of those who are reconciled with God, the highest of all the gifts of grace (Rom. v. 1). But every kind of peace or prosperity which the believers enjoy has its ultimate source in *God our Father*, and is practically imparted to them by *the Lord Jesus Christ*. The name of *Father* for God is the peculiarly Christian appellation, in distinction

from the Jewish name of *Lord*. Through Jesus Christ it has become the standing designation of God, and the expression of the new religious relation to him in Christianity, which was personally realized in Jesus himself, and through him is also established in all believers. The Fatherhood of God, and the sonship to God are thus correlative ideas. But that which was to Jesus a moral and religious relation, Paul takes as an essential relation. To him, God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, inasmuch as "the spirit of the Father," or "the spirit of holiness," constitutes the eternal essence of the Son. But he is *our* Father, inasmuch as we have become participators in the spirit of sonship by faith in the Son himself (who testifies to us of God's reconciliation with us, and works in us a new divine life), and hence participators also in the same nature with the Father and the Son.

i. 8—15. *Introduction.*

Thanksgiving to God for the faith of the Romans, and expression of the wish to preach the gospel to them also.

8. *First*: The second thing that Paul has to say to the Romans follows in ver. 10. On other occasions also the apostle usually begins his epistles (except Galatians) with thanksgiving for the faith of the community.—*Through Jesus Christ*: The good for which the apostle gives thanks to his God is conveyed through Jesus Christ.—*Your faith*: i.e. "that you are Christians." The existence of a Christian community in the imperial city is a thing that must have been quickly made known on all sides.

9. *For God is my witness*: asserts the sincerity of his thanksgiving to God. Similar forms of asseveration are found elsewhere in Paul's writings (Rom. ix. 1; Gal. v. 3; 2 Cor. xi. 31, &c.).—"In my spirit": in distinction from the Jewish service of God, which was a service in the flesh.—*That without ceasing*: lit. "how incessantly."—*I make mention of you*: "I am mindful of you," i.e. in my prayers.

10. Explanation of the tenor of the apostle's incessant remembrance of the Romans in his prayers. *If by any means, &c.*: properly, "If sometime I should at last succeed through the will of God in coming to you." The journey to Rome, then, is so important to the apostle that he keeps it continually in his prayers. To preach in the imperial city appears to him the final



goal of all his missionary activity. Rom. xv. 24 is very different from this.

11. The reason of his yearning for the Romans is the intention, which he cherishes, of imparting to them *some spiritual gift*; strictly, "some spiritual gift of *grace*." He means the advance of the Romans in spiritual knowledge, and more definitely in the knowledge of the "word of the cross" (see Introd.).—*May be established*: viz. by the Holy Spirit, the author of the "spiritual gifts of grace," for the imparting of which the apostle is only the instrument.

12. This verse further explains the expression, *be established*, and shows that the confirmation in the faith is to be mutual. As Paul on his side intends to bring a spiritual gift to the Romans, so, on the other hand, he hopes to be confirmed and quickened in his faith by the life in faith of the Romans.—*Comforted* should be "quickened."

13. The apostle considers the result of his preaching under the figure of a harvest. But the result he hopes for is nothing else than the bringing of the Romans to the understanding of *his* gospel.—*Among you also*: i.e. in the nation of the Romans, in whose number Paul reckons the Jews who had settled there, some of whom probably had even received the Roman citizenship (see note on ver. 6).—[*Let*: old English for "hindered."]—*Among other Gentiles* should be "among the rest of the nations."

14, 15. Here we find the obligation which he feels within him to bring his gospel to the nation of the Romans. The call which he has received lays upon him the general obligation to preach to all, without distinction of nationality or of degree of culture; and he on his part has resolved to go to the Romans.—*As much as in me is* [i.e. as far as it lies in my power]: in distinction from the hindrances which are beyond his control.

#### FIRST PART. i. 16—xi. fin.—*Doctrinal*.

##### i. 16, 17. *Statement of the Theme of the Epistle*.

16. *For I am not ashamed of the gospel* [the words of *Christ* are not found in the oldest MSS.]: These words lay down the intention of preaching this gospel to the Romans, and thus form the transition from the introduction to the theme of the Epistle. Although the word of the cross is to the Jews a stumbling-block

and to the Gentiles foolishness (1 Cor. i. 23), the apostle will not on that account be frightened out of preaching it.—*The power of God*: “a power of God” (comp. 1 Cor. i. 18). The gospel or the word of the cross is itself designated a saving power of God, for it is the will of God himself for the salvation of men which has been revealed, and needs only to be accepted by men for their salvation.—*Power of God (leading) unto salvation to every one that believeth*: The gospel is called a saving power inasmuch as it delivers the believers from destruction, from the divine judgment and eternal death, makes them partakers of justification or the forgiveness of sins, and of the new life in communion with Christ, and thereby assures them even now of their part in the future “life,” or of citizenship in the impending Messianic kingdom. But the gospel proves itself to be such a saving power for *every* believer, whether he be a Jew or a Gentile.—The word “*first*” is found in most of the MSS., but has been erroneously introduced from ii. 9, 10. That the Jews should have a more immediate right to salvation than the Gentiles, is a thought that Paul disputes as emphatically as possible throughout the whole Epistle.

17. The complete equality of Jews and Gentiles in the Messianic kingdom is now more exactly established by the conception of the *righteousness of God*, the fuller development of which forms the substance of the whole Epistle. This *righteousness of God* (i.e. the righteousness which God gives by his grace) stands opposed to man's own righteousness or the righteousness which is of works. It assumes that, according to the divine plan of salvation, there is no human excellence or human merit, in virtue of which God could declare man righteous, i.e. in a right state and well-pleasing in his eyes. It is of the very nature of this “righteousness of God” that it is given only by grace and on the ground of the reconciliation established by God himself in Christ. Hence it is not earned but given; more exactly, it is an imputed or attributed righteousness, an absolution of man from his guilt and punishment before God, and hence from the curse with which the Law threatens every transgressor. In a word, it is not so much an *inner moral condition* of man, which could be regarded by God as sufficient for him, as a *new religious relation* to Himself in which God places man, and which stands to the



new moral life in the relation of cause to effect. Finally, the condition under which the "righteousness of God" is realized is *faith*, in distinction from the works of the Law, i.e. a self-surrendering trust in the divine plan of salvation revealed upon the cross of Christ. This faith, as understood by Paul, is of course in the first instance a conviction of the miraculous power of God, who has awakened the Crucified to life, and thereby has testified that the crucifixion of the Messiah was a means of reconciliation for our sins appointed by God himself. Religiously and morally, however, this faith is the unconditional surrender of the natural finite and sinful self to the divinely appointed salvation historically revealed in Christ, by which surrender man renounces all power and merit of his own before God, and just by so doing lays himself open to the working of the divine spirit in him, that spirit which inwardly promises to him reconciliation with God, and works in him as the power of the new divine life.—*Revealed*: Hitherto the righteousness of God has been something hidden or veiled. Since the death of Christ upon the cross, however, the veil has been removed (comp. 2 Cor. iii. 14 sqq.).—*From faith to faith*: Springing from faith it continually begets new faith. It assumes faith, inasmuch as only faith can comprehend it, and it leads again to faith, inasmuch as the preaching, in faith, of the justification which is of faith, brings to the gospel more and more who have faith. The interpretation that the life of faith in the justified itself advances to ever higher and higher stages, is not probable. In that case, faith would have to be taken the first time as the beginning of the life of salvation, and the second time as its end. But faith with Paul is always simply a means, of which "righteousness" is the end, and never the final aim of the life of salvation itself.—*As it is written* (Hab. ii. 4): It is thus shown that the righteousness which is of faith is founded in the scripture of the Old Testament.—*The just shall live by faith*, should be "The man who is just by faith shall live." The passage in Habakkuk is literally, "The just man shall live by his faithfulness," i.e. by his fidelity to the divine will he shall obtain salvation. But the Greek version of the Old Testament rendered the word which means "fidelity" or "faithfulness" as if it were "faith," and this has caused Paul to understand it of righteousness which is of faith, and to connect the words "by

faith," not with the verb "shall live," but with the noun "the just man." Paul has taken the same prophetic utterance in the same way in Gal. iii. 11.

i. 18—viii. 39. *First Division of the First Part of the Epistle.*

An exposition of the righteousness which is of God in opposition to the supposed righteousness which is of the Law.

i. 18—v. 21. *First Sub-division.*

The thesis of the first division established and developed for the *religious* consciousness of the Jews.

i. 18—iii. 20. *First Section.*

The impossibility of a righteousness which is of the Law proved by the fact of the like unrighteousness of Gentiles and Jews, and the sway of the divine wrath over both alike.

i. 18—32.

The wrath of God upon the unpardonable iniquity of the Gentile world.

The apostle, developing first of all the idea of the *unrighteousness of men* as the hypothesis of the "righteousness of God," begins with the Gentiles, whose sinfulness he depicts in the strongest colours. He has in view, however, not simply a comparison between Gentiles and Jews. He aims from first to last at the latter. Hence even this description (i. 18—32), which to a great extent applies only to the Gentiles, is purposely made so general that the Jews also may recognize themselves in it; and then (ii. 1) he suddenly turns upon the latter themselves. In the description of the state of the Gentile world, the chief stress is laid upon the thought that the Gentiles have sinned against that divine will which was known no less to them than to the Jews, and are therefore without excuse. The Jews, then, in their Law have no advantage over the Gentiles, and, conversely, what makes the Gentiles so culpable is the very same thing that is found among the Jews also.

18. This verse is immediately connected with ver. 17.—*The righteousness of God* is the only way of salvation, because all men are unrighteous, and have therefore incurred the divine wrath due to their own action. *The wrath of God* and *the righteousness of God* stand, therefore, in opposition to one another. While the



latter was revealed in the gospel of the cross of Christ, the former is practically revealed by the fact that God punishes the *unrighteousness of men* with all the misery of sin, and thus brings to light their complete incapability of righteousness by their own works. The wrath of God which rests upon pre-Christian humanity because of the unrighteousness in which it has involved itself, here stands in contrast to the grace of God revealed in Christ; and the fact that this wrath extends to the whole human race before Christ, is established in order to prove thereby the necessity of justifying grace (or the righteousness which God gives). Like its opposites, love and grace, this wrath of God is, according to the scriptural view, an inner attribute of the divine mind. In its operation it is identical with the divine justice which will be especially, but not solely, revealed in the last judgment (Rom. ii. 5, v. 9, xiii. 5). Here, as the use of the verb in the present tense shows (*is revealed* should be "is being revealed"), it is the wrath of God in its present action that is meant. According to the teaching of the Old Testament, the wrath of God is directed especially against Israelites who are unfaithful to the Covenant. For Paul, both Jews and Gentiles alike fall under the divine wrath, because both have sinned against the divine will revealed unto them. Hence he proceeds to state universally that this divine wrath is being revealed *against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men*.—*From heaven*: The revelation of the wrath of God is a supernatural revelation of His almighty will from above. What it consists in is explained in ver. 24.—*Who hold* (i.e. "possess") *the truth in unrighteousness*: i.e. who know what the will of God is, and yet act contrary to it. This thought gives the clue to the whole argument of the first two chapters of the Epistle. The translation, "hinder," or "limit," which is sometimes given instead of "possess," is contrary to Paul's usual phraseology and to the context.—*The truth* is the divine will manifested in the works of God, as vv. 19 sqq. show. The thought and action of men is, however, practically opposed to this divine will which is so well known to them.

19. This verse establishes the thought that they actually possess the truth, and that their unrighteousness is therefore unpardonable.—*That which may be known of God*: lit. "that which is known of God," i.e. his knowable and actually known will, or

the moral order of the universe. This is the same that was previously called "the truth."—*In them*: What is meant here is the revelation of God in human consciousness.

20. *For the invisible things of him*: God's nature is in itself concealed from men. Nevertheless, it is perceived from what He does [*by* = "by means of" or "through"], i.e. spiritually, and indeed has been thus perceived ever since the creation of the world (*from* = "since"), so that all men—the Gentiles as well as the Jews—know the truth and the will of God, and none may excuse himself on the ground of ignorance.

21. *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God*: This knowledge of God, which is here ascribed to the Gentiles, is graven in the conscience of men, and is not erased in them even by sin and the worship of false gods. Notwithstanding all the darkening of their understanding which has resulted from their sin, this divine consciousness cannot be entirely extinguished, and upon it their moral guilt rests if they still withhold from this God the honour due to Him.—*Became vain in their imaginations* (or "thoughts"): inasmuch as their thoughts were turned to that which is vain and worthless, i.e. to the worship of worthless idols.—*Was darkened*: how, is explained by what follows, viz. inasmuch as by the worship of creatures they withdrew from the Creator the honour due to Him, and thus acted not only unpardonably, but also unreasonably.

22. Comp. 1 Cor. i. 19 sqq. The presumption and self-deception of philosophy was widespread, especially among the Greeks.

23. Comp. Ps. cvi. 20.—*And changed the glory, &c.*: properly, "And exchanged the honour due to the imperishable God for the likeness of the image of a perishable man," &c.; i.e. instead of worshipping the imperishable God, they have worshipped images of men and beasts which they have themselves made. Those in the form of men are more especially the Greek deities; those in the form of beasts are Oriental. Not only the Egyptians, but also other Eastern nations, had images of the gods in the form of eagles, serpents, lions, bulls, &c.

24 sqq. Here the penalties are depicted which the divine wrath has appointed to the Gentiles for their departure from the truth. The sins now enumerated are regarded as the divine penalty which overtook the foolish and unreasonable idolators



because of their denial of the imperishable God (see ver. 25).—*Uncleanness*: especially unchastity, and above all the unnatural unchastity in vogue among the Greeks.—*Through* (properly “in”) *the lusts of their own hearts*: the slumbering evil desires were roused to action, because the fear of the true God and His holy will was lost in them. But this connection between idolatry and a life in sin and shame has been divinely appointed.

25. The reason why they have fallen into these sins is repeated.—*The truth of God*: the truth, revealed by God himself, that He alone is worthy of divine honour.—*Into a lie*: strictly “into the lie,” i.e. into the ideas of gods in the form of men and beasts, falsely conceived in opposition to their better knowledge and conscience.—*More than*: strictly “along past,” i.e. “instead of.”

26. This verse takes up the thought of ver. 24 again, putting the most horrible of all forms of unchastity first.

27. *That recompense of their error*: The error is the religious error mentioned in vv. 23, 25. The recompense or retribution which has fallen upon them through the judgment of God is the vice here mentioned.

28 sqq. The picture of specially abominable individual sins is here extended, in conclusion, to a comprehensive picture of the sinful corruption of Gentile humanity.—*Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge*: that is to say, they know well enough what the will of God is, but they do not like to think about it.—*Reprobate*: i.e. “rejected;” a mind condemned in the sight of God. From sinful lusts has sprung, by the judgment of God, a tendency of thought and will rejected by God.—*Not convenient*: i.e. “unseemly.”

29 sqq. A closer description of the disposition and conduct of those who do what is not seemly.—*Filled with all unrighteousness*: This is the general sentence (comp. ver. 18), which is then worked out in detail. The actual manifestations of “unrighteousness” which are enumerated, all refer to the social intercourse of men with one another.—*Fornication*: the best MSS. omit.—*Covetousness*: properly “greediness.”—*Debate*: “strife.”

30. *Haters of God*: properly “hated of God,” infamous.—[*Despiteful*: properly “wanton.”]—*Disobedient to parents*: The duty of childlike reverence for parents stands highest among all duties to others.

31. *Implacable* should be omitted.

32. Here the whole line of thought is brought to its proper conclusion: Although they know that God, in accordance with His moral order will punish those who commit such sins with eternal death, yet they commit them; and they do this, not, as might be supposed, because evil desire overcomes them for the moment, but because they delight in sinning. The delight in the evil which others do, shows an audacity, therefore, greater than the audacity of one's own conduct.—*Judgment*: the just divine sentence.—It should be noticed that, from ver. 28 onwards, the special reference to vices peculiar to the Gentiles ceases, and we have a general picture of pre-Christian humanity. The way is thus sufficiently prepared for the transition to the Jews in the following chapter.

ii. 1—iii. 20.

The divine wrath upon the unpardonable unrighteousness of the Jewish people.

The proposition, that every one who offends against the divine will, contrary to his own better knowledge and conscience, has incurred the divine wrath, illustrated by the example of Gentile humanity, is now applied (ii. 1) to the Jews. Indeed, the whole previous discussion aims at them, since it is in opposition to the Jewish-Christian view that the impossibility of righteousness from the Law is to be proved. In the first place (ii. 1—10), it is shown generally that the principles, according to which God appoints reward and punishment, hold good for the Jews just the same as for the Gentiles. In the next place, the supposed superiority is rejected, which the Jews base partly upon the possession of the Law (ii. 11—24), partly upon circumcision (ii. 25—29), and partly upon the promises of God which have been committed to them (iii. 1—8). Finally, from the equal unrighteousness of the Jews with the Gentiles, to which Scripture also testifies, the fact is proved that no righteousness can be attained from the works of the Law (iii. 9—20).

ii. 1—10.

The principles according to which God punishes or rewards are entirely the same for the Jews as for the Gentiles.

1. *Therefore*: i.e. because the liability to punishment (according to i. 18—32) is due to the fact that one sins although aware



of thereby incurring the penalty of death.—*Whosoever thou art that judgest*: This is addressed to the Jew as distinguished from the Gentile. The Jew, in his pride because of the Law, declares the Gentiles to be “sinners” who receive only their deserts in the divine judgment with its punishment; but he does not consider that he himself stands altogether in the same condemnation with the Gentiles. Purposely, however, the Jew even here is not yet expressly mentioned, but, as in i. 18—32 Paul has given a general description, so he now expresses a general principle. And as in the former case the Jew is intended to recognize himself in the Gentile mirror, so here he is intended to feel that what is said about the man who judges applies directly to him.—*Thou condemnest thyself*: Thy judgment of others becomes a condemnation of thyself. When any one judges, he recognizes the universal validity of the moral standard. If, then, he does the same as the man who is judged by him, his own sentence rebounds in condemnation upon himself. The Jew does *the same things* as the Gentile whom he judges, because he too sins against his own better knowledge and conscience.

2. *According to truth*: i.e. it corresponds with the actual conduct of men. This verse contains the minor term of an incomplete syllogism, which fully expressed would stand thus: He who does that for which he judges others condemns himself. But we know that God's judgment is just and in accordance with the actual state of things. Therefore upon him who judges others the same divine penalty will fall of which he himself recognizes the justice in the case of the others.

3. But if the divine judgment is in accordance with the truth, how canst thou, who doest the same as those who are judged by thee, think that thou art able to escape from it?—*O man that judgest . . . and doest the same*: emphatically repeated. On the ground of these two facts, the Jew is convicted of having also incurred the penalty of death.

4. *Or despisest thou*: It shows contempt for the divine goodness when man thinks that he may reckon on it and sin with impunity, since it is only intended to bring sinners to repentance.

5. From the question in ver. 4, Paul lets the reader himself infer the answer, that one thus unrepentant may not rely upon God's goodness, and now he sets this forth himself most emphatically.—[*Against*, i.e. “for,” lit. “in.”]

6. Almost word for word from Psalm lxii. 12.—If the principle of recompense according to works is here set up in apparent inconsistency with the gospel of the righteousness of faith, we must observe that Paul's present purpose is to lead the Jewish mind to the admission that punishment and reward are accorded to the Jews and the Gentiles according to the very same principles. The religious question, whether any one can participate in eternal salvation at all without faith in forgiving grace, is not at present under consideration. Looking at the matter simply from the Jewish point of view, it follows from what has been said that if God requites men according to their works, the Jews have no pre-eminence over the Gentiles, but are just as much subject to condemnation as they. But in order to compel the Jews to acknowledge this, Paul must here assume the moral responsibility of man, and therefore the possibility of good works. It should be noticed at the same time that in other passages, where Paul is not directly concerned with the question of doctrine which leads him to place righteousness of faith in opposition to righteousness from works, he freely regards works as the standard of the divine judgment (see 1 Cor. iii. 13 sqq., ix. 17; 2 Cor. v. 10, ix. 6; Gal. vi. 7 sq.; and also the passages in which the apostle encourages his readers to "good works," 2 Cor. ix. 8; Gal. vi. 9 sq., &c.). While, from the religious point of view, "good works" are altogether impossible to the natural finite and sinful man, apart from that which God works upon him and in him, after all the moral consideration remains, that the worth of a man depends upon his moral conduct. At the same time it is of course understood that it is not mere outward performances that are meant by "works," but diligent action arising from a truly moral disposition; and, on the other hand, the question under what religious conditions this disposition arises in man, is not here considered. Where we are not concerned with the statement of a general religious system, but with the special determination of the actual relations of the moral life, this purely moral consideration has its proper place, not only in regard to Christian, but also pre-Christian humanity. It should further be noticed that where Paul speaks in this general moral sense of recompense according to works, he never speaks of them as works "of the Law," while he almost always makes this addition



in dealing with justification by faith, as the new way of salvation opened to us through Christ (comp. Rom. iii. 20, 28; Gal. ii. 16 sq.).

7. To him who in this faithful fulfilment of duty strives after glory and honour with God and after immortality, God will give eternal life as the reward which he strives for in the right and divinely appointed way.

8. *Contentious*, should be "boastful." The original word means properly one who works only for the sake of his own advantage; hence intriguing, "boastfully exalting oneself over others." It contains a side reference to the Jews, who in their supposed righteousness exalt themselves above the Gentiles.—*And do not obey the truth*: who yet, in spite of their boasting, do not obey the divine will which they know.

9, 10. These verses sum up with emphasis, in inverted order, the statement of recompense according to works just given.—*Upon every soul of man*: the *soul* or the interior of the body is here considered, as the seat of the sensible life.—*The Jew first* (or "especially"): the Jews are placed first because they boast of their pre-eminence over the Gentiles, and hence the apostle purposely speaks here of the punishment of the wicked first, and then of the reward of the good.—*Glory, honour*: this of course refers to the final judgment.—*And peace*: the divine peace of the kingdom of God.

#### ii. 11—iii. 8.

Rejection in detail of the supposed superiority of the Jews.

#### ii. 11—24.

Rejection of the supposed superiority on account of the possession of the Law.

11. This verse contains the general proposition which is carried out in greater detail in what follows. It is connected with vv. 9, 10, as the ground of what is there stated; the Jews have in no way any superiority before God, since with God there is no respect of persons at all.

12. The general proposition is established by its application to the Jews and the Gentiles. Although the former possess the Law and the latter do not, yet the moral responsibility, and therefore the relation between sin and punishment, is the same for both. Here, in accordance with the final purpose of the whole section, recompense is taken exclusively as the infliction

of penalty. The Jew is to be convinced that, in spite of his possession of the Law, he is no better than the Gentile.—*Without law*: without possessing the Mosaic Law.—*Shall also perish without law*: without their being judged according to the Mosaic Law the same punishment will still be assigned to them as to those upon whom judgment is pronounced in accordance with the prescriptions of that Law. That is to say, there is a culpable transgression of the divine will even apart from the domain of the Mosaic Law, because, even apart from this Law, there is a revelation of the truth and of the divine will (i. 18 sqq., 28, 32, ii. 14 sq.).—*Perish*: the opposite to this is life in the divine kingdom. To perish, therefore, is to be excluded from this kingdom; and inasmuch as eternal life has been promised only to the citizens of this kingdom, exclusion from it is regarded as eternal death (death without resurrection).—*In the law*: i.e. within the domain of the Law.—*Shall be judged*: i.e. will similarly be condemned to eternal death. Hence the mere possession of the Law gives no superiority.

13. [The marks of parenthesis here and at the end of ver. 15 should be omitted].—The other side of the matter is now brought forward. As, according to ver. 12, the Jew, in spite of his possession of the Law, is no better than the Gentile, so, conversely, if the Jew boasts of his fulfilment of the Law, the Gentile is no worse than he. For fulfilment of law exists no less among the Gentiles; while the mere possession of the Law, of which the Jew boasts, affords no security at all for its actual fulfilment. This thought is connected with what precedes by the general proposition, introduced to establish what has just been said, that it is not a question of the possession of the Law, but of its fulfilment. Here, again, the apostle takes the general moral view, without further inquiring whether any one really has completely fulfilled the Law. He is dealing here, not with the righteousness of faith, but, in accordance with Jewish ideas, with the moral conditions under which any one actually satisfies the demands of God. The Jew himself cannot but agree to the general proposition here expressed; but Paul applies it to prove that Gentile and Jew are in the same moral position.—*Shall be justified*: will be declared righteous by the sentence of God; i.e. this will happen on each occasion.



14 sqq. Here the thought of ver. 13 is explained. First the case is supposed of Gentiles actually fulfilling the Law (14—16), and then the Jew, who in spite of his knowledge of the Law does not fulfil it, is contrasted with them. Thus a fulfilment of the Law, such as the Jew boasts of, actually takes place among the Gentiles. Here, again, it is only the fact confirmed by moral experience that the apostle has in view, viz. that good works in accordance with the prescriptions of the Law are done in the Gentile world not less than within the domain of Judaism. He does not touch upon the religious question, whether man, relying upon himself, of his own finite and natural action, can deserve the divine approval.

14. For if the Gentiles practically fulfil the Law, they show that they also have a law, and may be justified as doers of the Law.—*Which have not the law*: i.e. according to the Jewish idea.—*By nature*: by virtue of the natural moral impulse as contrasted with a definite historical divine ordinance, such as the giving of the Mosaic Law. In ch. vii., again, the apostle is very far from denying all moral impulses to the man who stands outside the Christian community.—*Are a law unto themselves*: they supply the place of the Mosaic Law for themselves by a law which they show practically exists among them also. How they show it is pointed out in the next verse.

15. *Which show*: i.e. since they show, viz. by their practical fulfilment of the Law. The act in harmony with the Law causes us to infer the existence of the inner law in their hearts.—*Written in their hearts*: in contrast to the Mosaic Law which is written externally. This is not to be understood, like Jer. xxxi. 33 (comp. Heb. viii. 10), of a state of moral perfection which no longer requires the external Law, but simply of the inner bidding and forbidding voice of God in the heart, which supplied among the Gentiles the place of the Mosaic Law, and the apostle does not in the least mean that these Gentiles always actually follow this inner voice.—*Their conscience also bearing witness*: i.e. giving contributory evidence in addition to that which is given by their works.—*And their thoughts, &c.*, should be “and their thoughts, alternately accusing or excusing them.” Ver. 16 shows that this accusing and excusing takes place upon the day of judgment. What is meant, therefore, is not an inner strife

between good and evil thoughts in the human soul, but a judgment of God which takes the thoughts, the most secret thing in man (ver. 16), as a proof of the existence of the moral law for the Gentiles as well as the Jews, and accordingly summons these inner impulses as accusers or defenders of them before His judgment-seat.—“Alternately:” what the apostle means is, not that the thoughts of one man accuse or absolve another, and of course not that the thoughts mutually accuse and excuse one another, but that the thoughts of the Gentiles alternately declare them (the Gentiles) guilty or not guilty, as the case may be, of the violation of the law of conscience.

16. On the day of the divine judgment their thoughts appear as witnesses against them or in their defence. In the preceding verses it is the last judgment that is spoken of throughout.—*The secrets of men*: i.e. their thoughts.—*According to my gospel*: This is itself the substance of my proclamation of salvation, that God will judge through Jesus Christ, i.e. will hand over to him the execution of his judgment (comp. 1 Cor. iv. 5; 2 Cor. v. 10).

17—24. These verses contain the second member of the comparison which began in ver. 15. With the Gentile who keeps the Law, although he possesses no written law, is compared the Jew who possesses such a law and yet does not keep it. When the latter presumes so much upon his superiority to the Gentile in his knowledge of the Law, he is doubly deserving of punishment, since he himself does not keep the Law of which he boasts himself a teacher, but does the opposite to that which he teaches.

17. Read, “But if thou callest thyself a Jew,” &c. With this verse a protasis begins, of which the apodosis is wanting. The sense would require the whole to run as follows: “But if thou callest thyself a Jew, art thou not because of these very advantages of which thou boastest, far more culpable than the Gentile?” Instead of this, the thought is taken up in ver. 21 in a somewhat different form, and in ver. 23 the line of thought is brought to a conclusion. With living words Paul turns, in vv. 17 sqq., directly to the Jewish consciousness itself, in order to make the Jew feel most strongly how entirely unjustifiable his own conceit is.—“If thou callest thyself a Jew” (i.e. if thou layest claim to this name as a title of honour) *and retest in the law* (as though the mere possession of it were a merit) *and makest thy boast of God* (as Israel’s God of the covenant).



18. Read, "And knowest his will, and provest (i.e. triest) the things that differ, while thou art being instructed out of the Law."—"The things that differ:" i.e. what is the will of God, and what is not. The matter under consideration, therefore, is the application of the universal divine law to the question what is and what is not obligatory in a given case.

19. *A guide of the blind*: compare the similar expression of Jesus in regard to the Pharisees (Matt. xv. 14).—By "the blind" and "those who are in darkness," the Jew understands the Gentiles. The Jew thinks that the Gentile must come to him to school if he will learn what is the will of God.

20. *A teacher of babes*: Jewish pride treats the Gentiles as babes in religious matters.—*Which hast the form, &c.*: properly, "since thou possessest (i.e. thinkest that thou possessest) the bodily form (embodiment) of knowledge and of the truth in the Law."

21. This verse and the next consist simply of questions in which the sentence begun in ver. 17 is taken up again in a different form. Strictly the argument ought to proceed: If, therefore, thou who teachest others teachest not thyself, what avails it that thou boastest of the Law and of the covenant with God? Rather doest thou, who boastest of the Law, bring shame and contempt upon thy God by thy transgression of the Law.—*Teachest thou not thyself?* for thou practically actest as though thou knewest it not.

22. *Sacrilege*: strictly "temple-robbery." We can scarcely suppose that this refers to any withholding or embezzlement of the offerings for the temple in Jerusalem, in the discharge of which the Jews were especially zealous. Nor can we take the word in the general sense, which does not belong to it, of withholding the honour due to God. Hence nothing remains but to understand it of the plunder of heathen temples, which certainly is in striking contrast with the scrupulous fear of the Jew lest he should be in any way defiled by heathen idolatry. Out of greed, the Jew who adheres to the Law appropriates to himself even heathen temple property which is abhorred as unclean.

23. Read, "Thou that makest thy boast of the Law, by breaking the Law dishonourest God:" i.e. (as ver. 24 shows) thy evil conduct leads the Gentiles to blaspheme against the Giver of the Law.—The whole difference, then, between thee and the Gentile

is that, instead of being better, thou art worse, since thy knowledge of the Law only makes thee more worthy of punishment.—This verse refers back to ver. 17. It is not a question, but contains the final judgment upon the conduct of the Jew.

24. *The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you* : From Is. lii. 5, after the Greek version. The passage, which originally means that the name of God is despised because of the humiliation of the people of His covenant, is turned by Paul to mean that the name of God is blasphemed by the Gentiles because of the transgressions of the Law committed by the Jews.—*As it is written* : Paul's severe sentence upon the Jews is not too strong. This appeal to Scripture is placed at the end for the sake of emphasizing the whole.

#### ii. 25—29.

Rejection of the claim to superiority on the ground of circumcision.

If the Jew, according to what has preceded, has no pre-eminence over the Gentile in the Law, still in circumcision, at any rate, the sign of God's covenant with Israel, he seems to possess an unquestionable proof of his superiority. Against this, Paul now proceeds to show that the sign of the covenant has no value unless the covenant itself is kept. If it is not kept, the Jew is regarded, not simply as a Gentile, but as actually inferior to the Gentile as soon as the Gentile does what the Jew neglects.

25. "Circumcision profiteth indeed:" a concession which the Jews, however, are at once prevented from availing themselves of. The connection of this with what precedes is as follows: From the blasphemy against the God of the covenant, which is caused by the evil conduct of the members of the people of the covenant, Paul passes on to the sign of the covenant upon which they rely. Of course God is Israel's God of the covenant, and circumcision is the sign of the covenant that has been established; but it avails only if the Jew by fulfilling the Law discharges his duty under the covenant.—*Profiteth* : i.e. as a sign and pledge of the divine promises given to the people of God. But the fulfilment of these promises is conditional upon the fulfilment of the Law by the Jew.—*Thy circumcision is made uncircumcision* : i.e. it is just the same as if thou hadst never been circumcised at all.

26. If, therefore, the whole superiority given by circumcision



depends upon the fulfilment of the Law, then the converse is also true, viz. that if an uncircumcised Gentile keeps the Law, it is just the same as if he had been circumcised.—*The uncircumcision*: i.e. he who is uncircumcised.—*The righteousness of the law*: properly “the ordinances of the Law,” its provisions, the fulfilment of which is required for justification.—*Be counted for circumcision*: i.e. by God, at the last judgment, when He will treat the uncircumcised as though he were circumcised, and will, therefore, give him the blessings of which circumcision is the pledge.—Here, again, the apostle speaks entirely from the Jewish point of view, which assumes the possibility of the fulfilment of the Law (see note on ver 6).

27. Read, “And the uncircumcision which is by nature, since it fulfils the Law, shall judge thee who under letter and circumcision dost transgress the Law.”—“The uncircumcision which is by nature:” i.e. those who are Gentiles by birth.—“Since it fulfils the Law:” this is the ground on which the Gentiles shall judge the Jews.—“Shall judge thee:” shall virtually pronounce sentence upon thee before the judgment-seat of God; so that we finally come to a conclusion which is directly opposed to the action of the Jew (ii. 1). Instead of having a right to judge the Gentile, he is actually judged by him.—“Who under letter and circumcision:” i.e. although thou art in the possession of the written law and the external sign of circumcision.

28. The sentence just pronounced is established by a proposition of universal validity, which even the Jew must acknowledge. In connection with the preceding argument, however, this verse further means that the question whether any one is externally a Jew or not has nothing to do with the matter, the question being simply whether he is inwardly constituted as a member of the people of the covenant ought to be.

29. *And circumcision, &c.*: i.e. circumcision of the heart, circumcision according to the spirit, not according to the letter, is true circumcision. The case may, therefore, occur, not only of one who is a Jew outwardly [lit. “openly”] but not inwardly, but also, conversely, of one who is inwardly (lit. “in secret”) a Jew, but outwardly a Gentile, i.e. of a Gentile who is in the sight of God as good as a Jew who is faithful to the Law.—*Whose praise*: i.e. the praise of him who is secretly a Jew. The praise

is that which will one day be given to him by God at the last judgment.

## iii. 1—8.

Rejection of the claim to superiority on the ground of the possession of the promises.

Even if the Jew cannot boast of his possession of the Law and his circumcision without the corresponding fulfilment of the Law, there still seems to remain a great superiority of the Jewish people, inasmuch as God has promised to it the Messianic salvation, and God's word cannot deceive. But even this final superiority is practically valueless, since the faithfulness and truthfulness of God, to which the Jew appeals, only supply one proof more of the proposition that, in spite of every superiority to the Gentile of which he boasts, judgment still falls upon the Jew for his unfaithfulness to the covenant. Certainly it is true that the unbelief of *some* (ver. 3) cannot shake God's faithfulness, even supposing that all men should be found to be liars. On the contrary, God remains unchangeably the same and executes His word trustworthily. So much the less, however, may man undertake to dispute with God. By the untruthfulness and unrighteousness of man, the truthfulness and righteousness of God are only confirmed, and thus the default of man serves for the glorification of God (inasmuch as it is to sinners God grants salvation as a gift of grace). But to conclude from this that God is, therefore, unjust if He executes judgment upon the Jews, is as much as to renounce the belief in Him as the Judge of the world. And it would be evident blasphemy to argue that, if our untruthfulness sets the truthfulness of God in so much the clearer light, then the Jew ought not to be judged as a sinner, but rather may boldly go on sinning as much as ever he likes, so that this truthfulness may be made manifest. The discourse here takes the graphic form of a dialogue between Paul and a Jewish-Christian opponent, whose objections the apostle sets forth.

1. *What advantage then hath the Jew?* should be "What, then, is the superiority of the Jew?" i.e. the superiority over the Gentile of which the Jew boasts. This must be regarded as the question of the Jewish-Christian opponent, not as a question put to him by the apostle. After all that has been said, what has become of the superiority of the Jews over the Gentiles? Is it



not true that they have been endowed by God with special favours and blessings?

2, 3. These verses must be taken as the answer to the Jewish Christian's question. Even if the knowledge of the Law and circumcision in and by themselves cannot ensure the salvation of the Jews, there still remains a great deal in every respect.—*Chiefly*, should be "first." There is no "secondly" corresponding to this "first," because the blessings conferred by God upon His people do not come near being exhausted in this chief superiority. Paul is far from denying these blessings that have been conferred upon Israel (comp. ix. 4 sq.). It is a mistake to take these words as the objection of a supposed opponent whom Paul interrupts in ver. 4, and so prevents any further enumeration of the points of Jewish superiority. *Much every way*, is therefore meant quite seriously.—*To them were committed the oracles of God*: The divine utterances (here more especially the divine promises) were given to them to preserve, like property entrusted to them. That this is so is expressly affirmed by Paul himself; but he disputes the position that these promises give even the Jews a right to demand their fulfilment, without considering whether they themselves fulfil the obligations thus laid upon them by God or not.

3. Read, "For how? If some should not believe, can their unbelief then make the faithfulness of God of none effect?" This verse is intended to anticipate a further objection of the opponent, that the promises of God would have been made vain if Israel after all failed to attain salvation. For how? Does it follow in any way from my view, that the promises are made vain by the fact that some have not believed? Does the unfaithfulness of individual Israelites annul the promises of God once given to the people of Israel? This is the very same thought that the apostle clears up more fully in ch. ix.—xi.—"Their unbelief . . . God's faithfulness:" In Greek, the same word is used for belief, faith, and faithfulness. From Paul's opinion that the Jewish people has no claim to the fulfilment of the divine promises except on the assumption of its own faithfulness to the Law, the Jewish-Christian opponent draws the general conclusion, the blasphemy of which appears as soon as it is thus generally stated, that, according to Paul, the divine faithfulness is brought to nought by the unfaithfulness of *some* Jews. We should notice

the expression *some*. It is not simply to be understood as the opponent's, who would like to reduce the fact of the wholesale unbelief of the Jewish people to as small a measure as possible, but also expresses Paul's own opinion (see xi. 17). It is not a question here of the greater or smaller number of the unbelieving, since neither few nor many can annul the faithfulness of God in the fulfilment of His promises.

4. Paul now speaks again for himself, in order to remove the blasphemous conclusion with which he has been saddled.—*God forbid*: "Far be it" [lit. "Let it not be," and so in other cases where this phrase occurs]. We find this indignant disclaimer frequently in Paul's writings, where he rejects a false conclusion drawn from his own correct assertion (see Rom. iii. 6, 31, vi. 2, 15, vii. 13, ix. 14, xi. 1, 11; 1 Cor. vi. 15; Gal. ii. 17, iii. 21).—*Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar*: God shall rather remain truthful to us, even though, not only some, but all men be found to be liars. Even in this case, which indeed, according to Paul, in consequence of the universal sinfulness of all, both Jews and Gentiles, actually occurs, God will still remain faithful to His promises; i.e. He will actually carry out the salvation promised in the Old Testament (viz. by the new way of salvation in Christ).—*As it is written*: Ps. li. 4, after the Greek version. There it is a repentant sinner who acknowledges the justice of the divine judgment. "I sinned, so that thou mightest appear righteous in thy sentence, and be in the right if thou wert judged." Paul applies this saying to the establishment of the thought that God remains true even if the superiority which the Jews claim over the Gentiles fails in consequence of their unrighteousness, in order that, according to the Scripture, God may be found righteous in His words and gain the victory if one dispute with Him. For, as is further stated in what follows, the unrighteousness of man is the very thing that must serve to confirm the "righteousness of God." Those who would dispute with God are the Jewish Christians who lay claim to the inheritance of the promises as the right of Israel, whether the people remain unbelieving or not.

5. Read, "But if our righteousness set forth (i.e. bring to light) the righteousness of God," &c.—This verse introduces a new objection on the part of the Jewish Christian. As in this



whole section the "unrighteousness of men" is considered as the hypothesis of the "righteousness of God" (i.e. the righteousness which God gives to those who believe), it will scarcely do to understand the *righteousness of God* here as His penal justice. If this were the meaning, then the thought contained in what has preceded would be that God would still remain faithful to Himself, even though He should realize His threats rather than His promises, and therefore no one may complain of the non-fulfilment of the promises for which Israel's own unbelief is responsible. The meaning of verse 5 would then be: But if the unrighteousness of man brings out God's penal justice instead of His faithfulness in His promises, would not God be unjust in bringing on His wrath? But if the contrast between the unrighteousness of man and the righteousness of God is the same as in i. 17, 18, then the meaning is rather as follows: But if the unrighteousness of men is the hypothesis of the revelation of the righteousness which God gives to those that believe, does it not follow that God is unjust in punishing the unbelieving? The false conclusion which the apostle here represents the Jewish Christian as drawing from his own correct assertion, is certainly a very natural one, when we consider that human sin actually appears to be the very means which God Himself by His own will has appointed for bringing on the righteousness of God, after thoroughly destroying every fond idea of man's own righteousness (comp. ver. 7). The apostle, however, rejects this conclusion again as blasphemous.—*Our unrighteousness*: unrighteousness or transgression of the Law on the part of men generally, but especially on the part of the Jews.—*What shall we say?* What objection can be made to this from the Jewish-Christian point of view? "Is God (as might be supposed) unrighteous in bringing on His wrath:" i.e. in bringing upon the Jews as upon the Gentiles the wrath revealed in His penal justice (i. 18, ii. 8), so far, that is, as they do not confess their own unrighteousness and seek to attain salvation simply in the belief in the righteousness which God gives.—*I speak as a man*: as a foolish man. This speech is one that is only possible from a narrow, unintelligent point of view. The apostle makes it clear that the question is not his, but that of his opponents.

6. *God forbid*: "Far be it." This conclusion again is rejected

as blasphemous.—*For then how shall God judge the world?* This is intended to show that the conclusion to which the opponent would force the apostle, in order to compel him to withdraw the proposition that God reveals His wrath upon Jewish as upon Gentile humanity, is a religious impossibility. Else how could God be Judge of the world? He must punish sin in order that He may remain Judge of the world. For the Jews to escape with impunity would be altogether inconsistent with that attribute of God as Judge of the whole world which is undisputed even by the opponent. As Judge of the world, God must punish the sin of the Jews without detriment to His promises, the fulfilment of which, indeed, He brings about in a very different way from that which is supposed by the Jews, who rely upon the superiority of their nation.

7, 8. Here the objection of the opponent which is rejected in ver. 6 is further developed. If our untruthfulness is the very means in the hand of God of more abundantly displaying His own truthfulness, and thereby glorifying Himself, by what right am I judged all the same as a sinner? Does not the proposition follow, with which Paul, as he says, was actually slanderously charged, that one must do evil in order that good may proceed from it? This is the same deduction from the apostle's doctrine to which he returns again below (vi. 1) in order to combat it still more thoroughly. Here one point only is considered in reference to this idea, viz. that God ought not to punish the Jews with the loss of the promised salvation when their unrighteousness and unfaithfulness to the covenant is the very thing that serves to glorify the truthfulness of God.—[*For*: must be understood as connecting this verse with ver 5 after the interruption in ver. 6. Some of the best MSS. read "But," which would rather make it a reply to ver. 6 itself.]—*The truth of God*: more exactly "the truthfulness of God," which is manifested in the revelation of the righteousness conferred by God (i. 17).—*My lie*: i.e. the unfaithfulness of me, the Jew, to the covenant.—*Why yet am I also judged as a sinner?* lit. "Why am I still likewise judged as a sinner?" *Why* = with what justice. "Likewise" = I a Jew, judged just the same as the Gentile (who according to Jewish opinion is justly judged).

8. Read, "And should we not rather do, as is slanderously charged against me, and as some affirm that I say that we ought



to do evil in order that good may come," &c. ["Against me".... "I say:" The Greek is in the plural as in A.V., but it may be taken to refer simply to the apostle.] Here the speech of the opponent passes imperceptibly into that of the apostle himself, who gives as the blasphemous question of another what was, as a matter of fact, brought against him as the conclusion to be drawn from his own teaching.—*As some affirm*: i.e. Jewish-Christian opponents of the apostle.—*Good*: i.e. the fulfilment of the promise in which the truthfulness of God is revealed.—*Whose damnation* ["condemnation," or more exactly "judgment," in the sense of sentence, and probably with reference to the objection, "Why am I still judged?" of ver. 7] *is just*: Without more words the apostle breaks off further discussion, exclaiming, Whoever can even utter such a blasphemous opinion is so evidently culpable that he is liable without further ado to the divine judgment (the wrath of God, ver. 5). Hence the judgment of God upon the unbelieving Jews, although they have been entrusted with the divine promises, is still perfectly just.

### iii. 9—20.

Scripture also testifies to the like unrighteousness of Jews and Gentiles; and even the Law itself affirms in its own maxims that no righteousness can be attained by works of the Law.

9. In the form of a question propounded by the apostle to the Jewish-Christian mind, we have here a summing-up of the result of the whole preceding discussion.—*Are we better than they?* should be "Have we any excuse?"—*No, in no wise*: We Jews have no further plea. Since it has been shown that even the possession of the promises of God is so far from establishing a privilege not possessed by the Gentiles that (without prejudice to the divine truthfulness) even this does not in the least prevent God's judgment upon the Jews, there remains no further escape for Jewish pride.—"For we have before accused both Jews and Gentiles:" The charge of unrighteousness which has been made by the apostle against both parties, does away completely with the superiority over the Gentiles which the Jews boasted of possessing.—*That they are all under sin*: Sin is thought of as a ruling power to which all without exception are subject. But the dominion of sin, and righteousness from the works of the

Law, are mutually exclusive.—*All*: Jews as well as Gentiles. Here, where we are dealing with the religious estimate of man, the apostle insists that no one can stand before God through his own merits. Whereas, therefore, he has previously shown that the Gentile no less than the Jew can act according to the prescriptions of the Law, he here concludes with the proposition that the Jew no less than the Gentile is a sinner before the judgment of God.

10—12. *As it is written*: By a series of passages from the Old Testament, scriptural proof is now produced for the statement that the Jews no less than the Gentiles are under sin, and hence cannot be justified by works of the Law. Paul ignores the special reference which these passages have in the original connection in which they stand. The passages quoted are from Ps. xiv. 1—3.—*There is none righteous, no, not one*: In the Psalm (xiv. 1) the words are exactly the same here as in xiv. 3 (ver. 12 below), where they are repeated for the sake of emphasis, “There is none that doeth good, not even one.” Paul has purposely altered the expression “that doeth good” into “righteous,” the first time, that the words here may serve, so to speak, as a superscription for what follows. Then in ver. 12 he adheres to the original meaning. [Strictly, there is a slight difference, in another respect, in the Psalm in the Heb. as in A.V.; the first time simply, “There is none that doeth good,” and the second time more emphatically, “There is none that doeth good, none, not even one.”]

13. *Their throat . . . deceit*: Ps. v. 9. In the original it is enemies without who are here described, who endanger the pious man by their lying, deceitful words.—*An open sepulchre*: into which one may fall unawares. Their throat is spoken of as an open sepulchre inasmuch as their deceitful speech may plunge others into destruction.—*The poison of asps is under their lips*: Ps. cxl. 3.

14. Quoted with some freedom from Ps. x. 7.

15—17. Quoted with some freedom from Is. lix. 7, 8. In the original, a description of the ungodliness which prevailed among the Jews in the prophet's time.—*Destruction and misery*: The apostle is thinking here of the spiritual misery which is all the Jews derive from their way of self-righteousness.—*The way of*



*peace*: i.e. the way that leads to peace; in the prophet's sense of the words, the way of piety and fidelity to the Law; in Paul's sense of the words, the way of righteousness by faith.

18. Ps. xxxvi. 1.

19, 20. Conclusion of the whole discussion from i. 18 up to this point.

19. These passages of Scripture are by no means valid of the Gentiles only, as might perhaps be supposed; for all that the Law says concerns those who are within the domain of the Law, i.e. the Jews. But it is thus written expressly in order that every reply may be absolutely silenced, and it may be evident that all without exception are liable to punishment before God.—*What things soever the law saith*: This refers to the passages of Scripture which have just been adduced. The expression *law* is to be understood here in the broader sense of Old Testament documents generally. In ver. 20, on the other hand, it is used in the narrower sense of the collective Mosaic commandments.—*To them who are under the law*: better, “to those who stand within the domain of the law” [lit. “to those in the law”]. Because the holy Scripture was written for the Jews, Paul argues that it is therefore intended for the Jews, and that therefore all the passages previously adduced must have referred to the Jews. According to their original meaning, this is, of course, by no means the case with all of them.—*Every mouth . . . all the world*: Hence the Jews are expressly included.

20. Read, “Because no flesh shall be justified in His sight by the works of the Law; for by the Law cometh knowledge of sin:” This then is the reason why all without exception are liable to punishment before God (ver. 19); the ultimate cause of universal sinfulness. The practical non-fulfilment of the provisions of the Law, to which Scripture testifies, is referred to the impossibility, involved in the nature of the flesh, of satisfying the law of God. The words are quoted with some freedom from Ps. cxliii. 2. The reason assigned, therefore, for universal unrighteousness is likewise founded, according to the apostle, in Scripture.—“The works of the Law:” not, as might be supposed, simply the observance of external usages, but really moral works which the Law commands. As acts having a religious value and performed by man's own strength, they are, however, impos-

sible. Why they are impossible, the apostle indicates by the very expression, which he has himself selected, *no flesh*. It is the fleshly nature of mankind that makes the fulfilment of the Law impossible to it. The flesh which constitutes the essence of natural humanity not yet transformed into a new creature by the communication of the spirit of God, is not only finite and perishable, but is also at the same time necessarily the prisoner of sin (comp. Introduction).—*In his sight*: in the sight of the all-seeing Judge.—“For by the Law cometh knowledge of sin:” As the passages quoted from the Law (vv. 10—18) show, the Law only makes us conscious of universal sinfulness and unrighteousness; hence no one can be justified by the works of the Law. The word *law* here again has a double meaning (see note on ver. 19). A more thorough establishment of the proposition that the Law in the strict sense (i.e. the commandments of the Mosaic Law) can only produce knowledge of sin and not righteousness, is reserved for a subsequent portion of the Epistle (chap. vii.).

iii. 21—v. 11. *Second Section of first Sub-division.*

Development and establishment of the “righteousness of God” for the religious consciousness of the Jewish Christians.

iii. 21—26.

Exposition of righteousness by faith as the new saving ordinance of God for Jews and Gentiles, revealed upon the cross of Christ.

Now that it has been shown in the preceding section that the unrighteousness of man (in opposition to the supposed righteousness of the Jews by the works of the Law) is a universal fact which entirely does away with every superiority of the Jews, the apostle passes on to the development and establishment of the “righteousness of God,” which is revealed from faith to faith (i. 17). If the righteousness from the works of the Law, which is pursued by the Jewish Christians as by the Jews, proves impossible, then there remains, as the sole way in which God fulfils His promise (comp. iii. 4 sqq.), that “righteousness of God” without the Law, to which testimony has indeed already been borne both by the Law and the prophets. This is communicated simply by faith in Christ, and for that very reason it is



shared by all believers without distinction, both Jews and Gentiles. For as all without distinction have sinned, so by grace justification is granted to all by means of the redemption from the curse of the Law which has taken place in Christ Jesus. God has appointed the death of the Messiah for the believers as a sacrifice of reconciliation, in order that now in the present time He may make known His righteousness, after having in time past overlooked sins in His long-suffering; so that God Himself may be righteous as well as declare righteous him who believes in Jesus.

21. Read, "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested without the law, being witnessed [i.e. testimony being borne to it] by the law and the prophets."—*But now*: since from the Law comes no righteousness, but only knowledge of sin.—*The righteousness of God*: i.e. the righteousness which God gives, the righteousness imputed by God as a gift of His grace (see note on i. 17).—*Witnessed*: It is not altogether a new thing, but has been already proclaimed beforehand in the Law and the prophets. How, is shown in chap. iv. This righteousness, says the apostle, comes about without any co-operation of the Law, and yet testimony is borne to it by the Law as well as by the prophets, i.e. by the holy Scripture of the Old Testament. Here, again, the word Law is used somewhat differently the first time from the second time.

22. Read, "The righteousness of God which comes through faith in Jesus Christ," &c.: i.e. "I mean the righteousness of God which," &c. The expression *righteousness of God* has also a double meaning, and consequently is more closely defined by what follows.—"Through faith in Jesus Christ:" according to another reading simply, "through faith in the Christ," i.e. in the crucified and risen Messiah.—"Which comes unto all:" and therefore is destined for all believers.—*For there is no difference*: This still belongs to what precedes. For God in awarding righteousness makes no difference, among the believers, between Jews and Gentiles. This proposition is the practical nucleus of the Pauline gospel.

23. *For all have sinned*: This is the reason why God in the revelation of righteousness by faith makes no difference.—*The glory of God*: i.e. "the glory which God gives," the praise from

God of ii. 29, the honourable absolution from the accusation of the Law before the judgment-seat of God.

24. *Being justified freely*: properly, "being pronounced righteous as a gift." If they had praise and glory with God, then they would be pronounced righteous on the ground of their own merit. As the absence of any distinction in grace is based upon the absence of distinction in sin, so, conversely, the failure of all without distinction to deserve anything of themselves before God is proved by the fact that all alike attain justification only as a gift.—*By his grace*: The grace of God is the source, the redemption through the blood of Christ the historical communication of justification.—*Through the redemption*: i.e. the ransom. It is *in Christ Jesus*, inasmuch as Christ has paid a price, a ransom, such as is required for the emancipation of prisoners. In ver. 25 the blood of Christ is spoken of as this ransom. The redemption then ensued from Christ's death upon the cross.

25. Read, "Whom God hath set forth in his blood as a propitiation through faith, that He might show His righteousness on account of the clemency practised through the forbearance of God towards sins formerly committed."—*Propitiation*: The Greek word is rightly rendered thus, and not, as some have taken it, "mercy-seat" (i.e. the lid of the ark of the covenant which was sprinkled, on the great day of reconciliation, with the blood of the sacrificial beasts).—*In his blood*: this must be connected with the verb, "set forth." The translation, "through faith in his blood," is quite wrong. Christ has been set forth by God as a propitiation in his blood, inasmuch as a reconciling efficacy is attributed to his blood similar to that which was ascribed, in the Old-Testament view, to the blood of the propitiatory sacrifice. The apostle, therefore, desires to explain the significance of the death of Christ upon the cross in regard to salvation, by comparing it with a propitiatory sacrifice. But God has thus set forth Christ in his blood, as a propitiatory sacrifice *through faith*, or, more correctly, "by means of faith;" i.e. the death of Christ is efficacious only for believers, it expiates in the sight of God the sins of believers only. Here nothing is yet said of the communion with the death of Christ into which believers enter by baptism (Rom. vi. 1 sqq.). The saving efficacy of the death of Christ is elucidated by two different illustrations which follow



one immediately after the other: a ransom (ver. 24) and a propitiatory sacrifice (ver. 25). The first idea we find again in the Epistle to the Galatians (Gal. iv. 5), where we further learn that Christ has been sent to ransom those who are under the dominion of sin, and from being slaves, which they were under the Law, to make them sons of God. With this we should compare Gal. iii. 13, where this ransom is more closely defined as a ransom from the curse with which the Law threatens transgressors, Christ by his death upon the cross himself having become a curse for us, i.e. one accursed by the Law (Deut. xxi. 23); and see also 1 Cor. vii. 23. According to this, it is not so much God as the *Law* that receives the price or ransom. The purpose of the death of Christ is not to reconcile God or appease His wrath, but to offer to the Law, as an independent power over man, compensation for letting man go free from its dominion and withdrawing its condemnatory sentence against him. Nothing further is said here as to the way in which the death of Christ is a ransom. Probably the death of Christ is regarded in the first place as the execution of the punishment decreed against the transgressor by the Law, and the ransom from the Law as an emancipation of believers from every obligation to the Law, according to the principle expressed in Rom. vii. 1 sqq. In the passage now before us, on the other hand, the idea contained in Rom. viii. 3, of emancipation from the dominion of sin over man by the death of Christ, is not to be found. A different turn is given again to the thought in ver. 25, by the illustration of the propitiatory sacrifice. For the sacrifice, or more exactly the blood of the sacrifice, which is regarded as containing the life, is offered to *God*. God accepts its life as representing the life of him who offers the sacrifice. Christ, then, being here regarded as a propitiatory sacrifice, the death of Christ secures our salvation, not so much by emancipating us from the dominion of the Law, as by obtaining forgiveness of sins or removing our guilt from us in the sight of God; and so it is further conceived of as putting an end to the hostility between God and man, or as a reconciliation (see Rom. v. 10). While, according to the first idea, the curse of the Law, which is fulfilled in the person of the Crucified in his death, is the means of our redemption, according to the second the blood which has been shed has in itself a propitiatory power, inas-

much as it is offered in the place of men to God ; for when God accepts the blood of Christ, and so his physical life, in the place of the life of sinners, satisfaction is provided for the divine justice. Vain attempts have been made to eliminate from the words of the apostle this latter idea, which became the foundation of the later ecclesiastical doctrine. On the other hand, we must certainly consider that here, as in the Epistle to the Galatians, Paul speaks from the Jewish point of view, and wishes to bring the saving efficacy of the death of Christ into harmony with Jewish views, and then that for this purpose he makes use of various ideas which cannot at once be brought together into one consistent whole. And while in saying this we are far from affirming that the apostle consciously accommodates himself to ideas with which he has secretly no sympathy, at the same time it is quite certain that they belong to those various representations of religious thought which Paul made use of by turns as he required them. The doctrine concerning the true value of the death of Christ for our salvation which goes deepest and is most peculiarly his own, is given by the apostle in another place (see Rom. viii. 3, and compare also 2 Cor. v. 19—21).—"That he may show his righteousness:" This, then, is the divine purpose of the propitiatory death of Christ. The expression "righteousness of God" has here again a double meaning. On the one hand, the death of Christ is regarded as the divinely appointed means for the remission of the guilt of sin, and so for the establishment of the "righteousness which God gives;" on the other hand, the propitiation offered by this death satisfies the wrath or penal righteousness of God. This double meaning of the word appears still more definitely in ver. 26.—"On account of the clemency practised through the forbearance of God towards sins formerly committed:" In his long-suffering and forbearance, God overlooked the sins of men formerly committed ; but as, all this time, the righteousness of God had not yet been established in men, so also the penal justice of God had hitherto received no satisfaction. Both these things take place, therefore, as is said in ver. 26, *at this time*, through the death of Christ upon the cross. It is certainly somewhat difficult to say wherein the apostle can have found the former long-suffering of God, and still more difficult to say how this statement is to be reconciled with the



previous proposition that the wrath of God had been revealed upon the whole of pre-christian and non-christian humanity. See further ix. 22.

26. Read, "That He might show His righteousness at this time, that he might be righteous and make him righteous that is of faith in Christ."—The righteousness of God, which, as we have said above, is to be understood in a double sense, is to be revealed in both ways.—"That He might be righteous:" not that He *alone* might be righteous, but that He might Himself show Himself to be righteous, i.e. in His penal justice.—"And make him righteous:" i.e. declare him righteous. This refers to the righteousness which God gives, or imputes, on the ground of faith in the saving efficacy of the death of Christ upon the cross.

### iii. 27—30.

Conclusion from the nature of the "righteousness of God:" viz. the final rejection of every privilege of the Jews through the emancipation of righteousness from the Law, and the entirely similar treatment of Jews and Gentiles through the divine grace.

27. "Where then is the boasting?" A triumphant question, which the apostle proceeds at once to answer in the name of the opponent, who is now entirely defeated.—"The boasting:" i.e. the boasting of the Jews on account of their supposed privileges.—*It is excluded*: every entrance is closed against it.—*By what law*: i.e. By what law is it excluded?—*By the law of faith*: an incongruous, rhetorical expression. Justification by the Law and justification by faith are recognized opposites. But here the new way of salvation revealed upon the cross of Christ, as distinguished from the religion of the Law, is itself spoken of as a law, i.e. as a divinely revealed saving ordinance. In a similar sense, elsewhere we read of an obedience of faith, and again, a different turn being given, we find a law of the spirit and of liberty. The law of works, as opposed to this law of faith, is of course the Mosaic Law.

28. *Therefore we conclude*: i.e. from what has been said in ver. 27.—*By faith*: Luther added here the word "alone," and the Catholics charged him with falsifying the word of Scripture in so doing, but by the addition he only gave most faithfully the actual meaning of the apostle.

29. "Or is God the God of Jews only? is He not also the God of Gentiles?"—"Or:" i.e. supposing that any one, after all that has been said, would still come to another conclusion. If justification results from faith and not from works, then (according to vv. 22 sq.) the abolition of every distinction between Jews and Gentiles follows as a matter of course; nevertheless, the apostle, going even further than is necessary in defence of his argument, adds a new proof. The unity of God is the fundamental doctrine of Judaism. But from this it necessarily follows that He has a Fatherly care for the Gentiles no less than the Jews, and therefore justifies both alike through faith. Here, again, the discourse takes the graphic form of a dialogue between Paul and the defeated opponent, and so proceeds in question and answer, Paul being the questioner and the other answering.

30. *Seeing*: according to another reading, "If, at least;" i.e. if, as is indeed taken for granted by the Jews.—*Shall justify*: i.e. in each given case.—*By* (lit. "from") *faith . . . through faith*: The change in the preposition is not intended to indicate any difference in the manner in which *circumcision* and *uncircumcision* (i.e. Jews and Gentiles) are justified, but, on the contrary, is meant to express with rhetorical force the precise equality of the circumstances of both.

### iii. 31—iv. 25.

Proof that this equal righteousness by faith for Jews and Gentiles is in accordance with the Law itself, i.e. with the Old Testament Scripture.

31. Does it then follow from all this, as might be supposed, that we reject (invalidate) the Law through faith? The question is raised from the point of view of the Jewish-Christian opponent, according to whom of course Paul by his gospel does away with the Law. The apostle, in denying this, passes on to prove further that the new gospel in no way sets aside the divine honour of the Old Testament. He now seeks, therefore, to reconcile those Jewish ideas of which he himself must acknowledge the justice with the mission to the Gentiles free from the Law.—*God forbid*: see notes on iii. 4, 6.—*Yea, we establish the law*, should be "but, we establish the law." How, is shown by what follows, where Paul seeks to demonstrate righteousness from faith, by the



example of Abraham. Here, again, the word "law" has two meanings. While the Jewish-Christian accusation is that Paul absolves men from the observance of the Mosaic commandments, that establishment of the law, which he affirms, is really the carrying out of a principle to which, he says, testimony was already borne in the Old Testament. What Paul teaches as the establishment of the Law is of course, in the opinion of the Jewish Christian, simply an abrogation of the Law.

## iv.

The establishment of the Law which Paul has in his mind is demonstrated by the example of Abraham.

## iv. 1—9.

In reply to the objection that Abraham was actually justified by works, the apostle shows that this supposition is erroneous, and therefore the Jewish Christian cannot appeal to the example of Abraham for the establishment of righteousness by works. Even in the case of Abraham, in entire accordance with the gospel of Paul, justification proceeded, on the contrary, from faith through forgiving grace; and only to him who, like Abraham, has been justified by grace, does the blessing of the Old Testament apply. Here also the discourse is at first continued in the form of a dialogue. Ver. 1 is a question from the Jewish-Christian point of view, the reason for which is given more exactly in the first words of ver. 2. In the last words of ver. 2, *But not before God*, Paul speaks again in his own person in order to reject the proposition of the opponent.

1. Read, "What shall we then say that Abraham hath found, our father [or "forefather," according to some of the best MSS.] according to the flesh?"—If in defence of his doctrine of righteousness by faith, Paul appeals to the Law itself against the Jewish Christian, the example of Abraham the tribal father of Israel still seems to be against the apostle. For Abraham, in the opinion of the Jewish Christians, was undoubtedly justified by works, and hence the boasting which Paul absolutely denies to the Jews (iii. 27) cannot at any rate be denied to him.—"What shall we then say?" What conclusion are we to come to, in Paul's opinion, as regards the righteousness of our father Abraham? If righteousness of faith is to be regarded altogether as

the proper doctrine of the Old Testament, how is it with the righteousness which our father Abraham obtained?—"According to the flesh," belongs, according to the best reading, to the words "our father Abraham," not to the verb "hath found." Abraham is spoken of as the tribal father or original ancestor of the Jews. To this epithet is opposed that of (spiritual) father of all believers in ver. 16.—*Found*: i.e. "attained." The appeal to the example of Abraham appears to the Jewish Christians to be most striking evidence against the Pauline doctrine of the impossibility of righteousness from the Law.

2. Read, "For if Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory.—But not before God." The first sentence explains the ground of the objection which has just been raised (ver. 1) in the form of a surprised question. It is not meant to raise any doubt as to the justification of Abraham; but, on the contrary, to set it forth as something, in the opinion of the Jewish Christian, altogether indisputable, in order that then by the conclusion, *he hath whereof to glory* (lit. "he hath a subject of boasting," a merit of which he may boast with good reason), Paul's propositions set forth in iii. 27—31 may be entirely overthrown. Then follows immediately the swift reply of the apostle, *But not before God*. This boasting is worthless before God, and consequently even in the case of Abraham we cannot for a moment speak of justification by works, as the Jewish Christian supposes. On the contrary, the Scripture expressly says, Abraham *believed*, and this was reckoned to him for righteousness. The proposition of iii. 27 stands good then, even when we consider the case of Abraham, that all boasting of our own is absolutely excluded.

3. Scriptural proof that Abraham had nothing whereof to boast before God, and therefore was not justified by works. The quotation is from Gen. xv. 6, after the Greek version. The meaning there is that God reckoned Abraham's belief in the promise of a numerous posterity as a special merit, as a proof of his virtue and piety. Paul, however, takes the *counted* (or "reckoned") *to him* in the sense of "adjudged to him by grace," and accordingly refers this accounting of righteousness to the divine absolution of the sinner from his guilt.—*It was counted unto him for righteousness*: i.e. his faith was so counted, as is more



definitely stated in ver. 5. Faith is estimated by God, in His grace, as if it were morally sufficient, not inasmuch as it already contains in germ the whole new life, but because it trusts without the slightest doubt to the divine promise to forgive us our sins.

4, 5. These verses contain the minor premise (in two divisions) of an incomplete syllogism, the major premise of which is found in ver. 3, while the conclusion, as is often the case with Paul, is omitted. To him who is occupied in works his reward is reckoned not by grace, as in the case of Abraham, but in proportion to his deserts. And on the other hand, to him who is not occupied in works, but believeth in him who pronounceth the ungodly righteous, as in the case of Abraham, his faith is reckoned for righteousness. Consequently even Abraham was not made righteous by works, and so he has no ground for boasting of his own righteousness.—*That worketh*: who has works and performances of his own to show.—*Of debt*: as wages that have been earned.—*Believeth on him*, &c: i.e. rests his faith upon him, &c.—*That justifieth the ungodly*: i.e. “that maketh the sinner righteous.” This holds good even of Abraham, who was likewise in need of the divine forgiveness of sins. The Greek word here rendered “ungodly” properly means impious, and among the Jews was used especially of idolators. Here it means simply one who does not worship God in the way he requires (i. 18), i.e. the sinner, inasmuch as sin is an offence against the will of God.

6—8. These verses establish the proposition that the faith by which Abraham was justified referred (just as it does in the Pauline gospel) to the God who does not reckon guilt against the sinner; that therefore Abraham also was in need of forgiveness of sins, just as much as we are; for it appears from the words of David, too (Ps. xxxii. 1 sq.), that the Old Testament faith is substantially the same as that of the gospel. It is a mistake to suppose that David is here introduced as a second example of justification by faith.—*David*: The superscription of the psalm describes it as Davidic.—*Describeth the blessedness of the man*, should be “declareth the man blessed:” Paul regards this as referring to justification without works. The psalm of course does not speak of justification by faith in the apostle’s sense, but it declares that man blessed whose sins God forgives, and in this

Paul finds testimony to his gospel of righteousness imputed by grace.

iv. 9, 10.

The apostle, having shown that testimony to righteousness by faith has already been borne in the Old Testament by the example of Abraham, now further proceeds to prove that the blessing of those to whom God reckons righteousness without works applies, in the first place, not to the circumcised but to the uncircumcised. For the justification to which this blessing refers was Abraham's before he was circumcised.

9. To whom then does this declaration of blessedness in Ps. xxxii. refer? To the Jews alone, or also to the uncircumcised Gentiles? for we say that to *Abraham* his faith was reckoned for righteousness; so that from this it appears to follow that the justification by faith to which the Scripture testifies refers merely to Abraham's seed, i.e. to the Jews alone. The necessity for the question here raised rests upon the fact that it is Abraham, the ancestor of Israel, whose faith was reckoned to him for righteousness. For from this very fact the Jewish-Christian mind might easily deduce again a limitation of righteousness by faith to the actual descendants of Abraham.

iv. 10.

In order to meet this natural objection, the apostle now reminds his readers of the circumstances in which faith was reckoned for righteousness to the ancestor of the circumcised. This took place at a time when he had not yet been circumcised, and consequently it was the faith of one uncircumcised which God reckoned for righteousness.—The justification of Abraham by faith is described in Gen. xv., his circumcision not till Gen. xvii.

iv. 11, 12.

From what has just been said, it follows further that circumcision is no superior excellence of the Jews, to which they can appeal as a pledge of their righteousness; for it was given to Abraham distinctly as a sign and pledge of that righteousness by faith which he attained while he was still uncircumcised. For this same reason, physical descent from Abraham cannot establish any superiority at all of the Jews over the Gentiles. On the contrary, it is by circumcision that Abraham became the father



of all those who believe without having been circumcised; and he is the father of the circumcised only in so far as they take as their example his faith, which he had while he was still uncircumcised. This argument, which betrays all the subtilty of Jewish learning, robs the Jewish-Christian opponent of his chief weapon. Circumcision itself, which was reckoned as the pledge of the superiority and the promises bestowed upon the people of Israel, becomes in the hands of Paul an argument against the privileges of the Jews, and in favour of placing the uncircumcised Gentiles on precisely the same footing with the Jews.

11. *A seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised*: Circumcision, then, is a divine pledge that it is the uncircumcised that are put in possession of righteousness by faith. Hence it is an argument in favour of the Pauline gospel, and not against it. This interpretation of course is not consistent with the historical religious meaning of circumcision, but it is quite in accordance with the Jewish theology of the apostle's day.—*That he might be* (i.e. this is the divine purpose in virtue of which Abraham received the sign of circumcision) *the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised* (strictly “in [or “through”] uncircumcision”): that is to say, that he might be their father in the spiritual sense, so that even the right to call Abraham their father is denied to the Jews, if they mean to found upon that an exclusive claim to the blessings promised to Abraham and to his seed.—*Also* should be omitted.

12. Of course Abraham was also to be the father of the circumcised, but only in the sense in which he is also the father of the uncircumcised, i.e. father of those Jews who not only are *of the circumcision* (i.e. simply belong naturally to the nation of the circumcised), but also *walk in the steps of the faith* which our father Abraham had *being yet uncircumcised* (lit. “in uncircumcision”). In a word, he was to be the father of those who are not only physically, but also spiritually, children of Abraham.

#### iv. 13—16.

Further proof that Abraham is the (spiritual) father of *all them that believe* [ver. 11], whether they be uncircumcised or not. The fulfilment of the promise given to Abraham and his seed can only

come from faith, not from works of the Law ; and consequently the opinion of the Jews that the inheritance of the promises given to Abraham is assured to them, his natural descendants, through circumcision and the Law, falls to the ground. The inheritance of the promise given to Abraham is based, not upon the observance of the Law (to which the circumcision of the flesh pledges them), but upon the righteousness of faith. For if the contrary were the case, faith would lose its substance and the promise become invalid, since the Law, because of the sin which it provokes, can only produce wrath. And it is for this reason that the promised inheritance is only given on the ground of faith, namely, so that it may be given by grace, and so the fulfilment of the promise may be made really sure to all the descendants of Abraham, not only to those who are sons of Abraham according to the Law, but also to those who are sons of Abraham according to faith.

13. *The heir of the world*: Historically, the promise referred only to the inheritance of the land of Canaan (Gen. xii. 7, xiii. 15, xv. 18, &c.); but Jewish theology interpreted it of the Messianic dominion over the whole world (so in Matt. v. 5, comp. xix. 28 sqq.), and the first believers looked for its fulfilment upon the return of Christ (comp. 1 Cor. vi. 2 with Rom. viii. 17). When we consider that the Jewish Christians also understood this dominion in Jewish fashion as the dominion over the Gentiles given to the people of Israel, it was a hard demand to make, that they should grant that in this matter also Israel was to have no pre-eminence over the Gentiles who believed in the Messiah.—*Or to his seed*: his descendants. What has preceded (ver. 11) shows us that Paul does not mean this “seed of Abraham” to be limited to his natural descendants.—*Through the law*: Instead of continuing, For the promise which was given to Abraham and his seed does not refer to his physical but to his spiritual descendants, Paul here introduces at once the idea of the Law, because it seemed to the Jewish Christian that the inheritance of the promise given to Abraham was linked to the observance of the Mosaic Law, to which circumcision in the flesh was a pledge. But if the natural descendants of Abraham, or his descendants “of the Law,” counted upon the fulfilment of the promise for the sake of the Law that was conferred upon them, Paul



shows that, on the contrary, the promise would have become altogether vain, if it had not excluded participation through the Law, and required participation through faith. Hence, however, it followed that the claim of the "descendants of Abraham from the Law," i.e. of the Jews, to the exclusive dominion of the world was a deceptive claim.

14. *For if they which are of the law* (lit. "those from the Law," those who derive from the Law their claim to the inheritance) *be heirs* (can alone share in the inheritance), *faith* (by which Abraham himself, according to ver. 5, was justified) *is made void* (i.e. "emptied" of its substance). Righteousness and the prospect of the future inheritance necessarily given with it are lost.—*And the promise made of none effect*: because it cannot now be fulfilled.

15. *Because the law worketh wrath*: Under the Law, man, instead of becoming a partaker of the divine promise, only becomes subject to divine punishment, because it is through the Law that the knowledge of sin comes (iii. 20).—"But" (not *for*) "where there is no law, neither is there any transgression:" Where the Law with its condemnation of the sinner does not exist (as in the case of righteousness by faith), neither does any transgression of the Law, which could *work wrath* and so cause the forfeit of the inheritance. The words are not meant to show why the Law works wrath (in that case we must have had: "For where the Law is, there is transgression"), but to show that the hindrance to the attainment of the inheritance, which is unavoidable under the Law, namely transgression, is only removed when no attempt is made to attain the inheritance from the Law.

16. "Therefore it (the inheritance) is through faith, that it may be of grace:" It must be of grace because this is the only way in which the hindrance of transgression (ver. 15) can be removed. Hence if the promise is to stand good (comp. iii. 4), its fulfilment must take place by way of grace. But if the inheritance can only be conferred of grace and not according to merit, it necessarily follows further that it can only come "through faith," and hence that it must be shared in by all believers without distinction.—*That which is of the law*: those who derive their descent from Abraham from the Law.—*That which is of the faith of Abraham*: his descendants who are so of faith, as the Gentiles

also may be.—*Who is the father of us all*: the father of the believing Gentiles as of the believing Jews. The main idea is now brought prominently forward again in order to lead on to a new line of thought.

## iv. 17—22.

A closer definition of the nature of the faith by which Abraham became the *father of us all*. By Abraham's having become the father of all believers, the saying of Scripture has been fulfilled that God would make him father of many nations. This prophecy, however, was fulfilled in him, because he believed in God, who quickens that which is dead and calls to life that which is not [see note on ver. 17]. Although, according to human judgment, there seemed to be no possibility of the prophecy being fulfilled in him, both he and Sarah having long passed the age at which men have children born to them, yet he doubted not the divine promise, but was fully convinced that God is able to fulfil that which He has promised. And therefore his faith was counted to him for righteousness. At the same time, Abraham's faith is more closely defined as faith in the God who calls to life that which is dead, and so the last proposition of the chain is duly prepared for, that the faith by which Abraham was justified, as defined by its subject, is essentially the same as the justifying faith of the gospel.

17. *As it is written*, Gen. xvii. 5: Scripture is here adduced to show, in the fact that Abraham is the father of us all, the fulfilment of a prophecy given to him, which was delivered because of his faith, and at the same time to define more closely, by reference to the subject of this prophecy, the nature of the faith which makes him our example.—*Of many nations*: In the passage in the Old Testament this means the many tribes which derive their descent from Abraham. Paul, on the other hand, refers the words to the Gentile nations generally who are called to Christian salvation.—*Before him whom he believed*: i.e. in the sight of, or according to the judgment of, the God whom he believed, he was appointed to be the father of many nations.—*Who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were*: "Who quickeneth the dead and calleth to that which is not that it may be." [The A.V. is the more literal rendering, but the Greek is taken by very many commentators to



have the meaning given here.] This miraculous activity of God is brought forward in order to define more closely the subject of the faith on account of which Abraham was appointed the father of many nations. It is to the God who quickens the dead, and calls into being that which is not, that this faith refers. The expressions are purposely left general, in order to bring out the agreement of the faith of Abraham with the Christian faith. The God who quickens the dead revived (ver. 19) the dead bodies of Abraham and Sarah, just as He raised Jesus from the dead. The God who calls that which is not into being, called a numerous posterity into life for Abraham who had no heir, just as He has raised a numerous people for Himself from among the Gentiles, who are not a people (Rom. ix. 25). It should further be noticed that Paul here brings out a different side of Abraham's faith from that in ver. 5. There he rather regards its subject as the forgiving divine grace, while here it refers to the divine omnipotence which can realize even that which appears humanly impossible.

18. Read, "Who against hope in hope believed."—This verse specifies still more definitely that Abraham, trusting in God's promise, still kept up hope even where, according to human judgment, there was no longer any hope at all.—*So shall thy seed be*: i.e. as numerous as the stars of heaven. The promise is found in Gen. xv. 5.

19. Read, "And without becoming weak in faith, he considered his own body, now dead, being about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; but he," &c.—The consideration of his own dead body and Sarah's still did not shake his faith.—*Dead . . . deadness*: i.e. they were too old to have children born to them.

21. *Had promised . . . was able*, should be "has promised . . . is able."

22. Here the apostle refers in conclusion to the starting-point of the whole exposition in ver. 3.

[22, 23, 24. *Imputed*: better "counted" or "reckoned." It is the same word as in ver. 3.]

#### iv. 23—25.

In this justification from faith, which Abraham obtained, is to be found the scriptural proof of justification by faith generally, in

accordance with the declaration of iii. 31 ; and thus the proposition is confirmed that the Pauline gospel actually establishes instead of abolishing the Law. Abraham's faith is the type of our faith. As his faith in the God who quickens that which is dead and calls into existence that which is not, was counted to him for righteousness, so to us also, who believe in the God who has raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, this faith shall be counted for righteousness : for it was for our sins that Jesus was delivered unto death, and for our justification he has been raised. The immediate task of the apostle has thus been accomplished. Not only has the "righteousness of God" been proved to be the only possible way of salvation, and its own nature fully set forth, but also its agreement with the Law, i.e. with the divine revelation of the Old Testament, has been established.

23. What is written there of Abraham, that his faith was reckoned to him for righteousness, refers not only to him personally, as though the whole matter had only an historical interest, but it was written for our sakes also.

24. It has a typical significance for us, inasmuch as it represents beforehand in Abraham that which was afterwards to be realized in us.—"To whom it shall be reckoned" [same word as in vv. 3, 9, 10]: to whom faith shall be reckoned for righteousness.—*Believe on him* : properly, "found our faith upon him." The ground of this faith is the divine omnipotence, which manifests itself in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The subject of the faith historically is the fact of this resurrection itself, and the divine purpose expressed in this fact.—*Jesus our Lord* : The importance of the historical personality of Jesus consists in this very fact, that he is our Lord.

25. Here, in conclusion, the divine purpose is once more stated which is expressed in the two connected facts of the death of Jesus upon the cross and his resurrection.—*Delivered up for our offences* : given up to death (viz. by God, see iii. 25) in expiation of our sins.—*For our justification* : for the sake of the justification which we have obtained (by faith in his death); i.e. in order to make us participators of the possessions which God has promised to those who are declared righteous, especially deliverance from the "wrath" to come and life in the kingdom of God.



## v. 1—11.

The result of the righteousness of God: peace and reconciliation with God, and at the same time deliverance from wrath, and the hope of life in the kingdom of God, the former imparted through the death, the latter through the resurrection, of the Son of God.—The apostle having already indicated the death and resurrection of Jesus as the two interdependent divine events by which our salvation is prepared (iv. 25), now proceeds to point out more exactly and explain more fully what is imparted to believers by means of these two facts.

1. *Peace with God*: the same thing that is called “reconciliation” below (vv. 10, 11) [A. V. *atonement* in ver. 11]. This *peace* is the immediate result of justification. It consists substantially in the relation of sonship to God in which we have been placed by justification. Its contrary is enmity against God (v. 10), which has been done away with by the work of reconciliation.

2. Here is added to peace with God, the second possession which is given, in like manner through Christ, to those who are justified: the hope of future glory in the divine kingdom.—*Have access into*: lit. “have received the introduction into.”—*By faith* should be omitted.—*This grace wherein we stand*: What kind of grace this is, is explained by the addition, *and rejoice in* (properly “boast of the”) *hope of the glory of God*. Hence by *grace* here we are not to understand justifying grace (for then the whole addition would be idle), but the grace which makes those who are justified heirs of the promises (iv. 13 sqq.), and heirs and citizens of the Messianic kingdom. In this grace those who believe stand already; for if we are sons of God, we are also heirs (viii 17).—“And boast of the hope:” the believers who are justified have then of course a ground for boasting, or rejoicing in their pre-eminence over all other men, not indeed because of their own merit, but because of the grace in which they stand. The words refer plainly to the previous discussion, in which it was shown that the Jews have no reason at all for boasting of their inheritance of the promise on the ground of their supposed righteousness by the Law (iii. 27, comp. iv. 2).—*Glory of God*: What is meant is the celestial brilliancy by which God is surrounded, and which will one day be bestowed by God upon the “sons of God” also in the Messianic kingdom.

3, 4. The believer boasts not only, like the Jew, of the hope of future glory in the Messianic kingdom, but also of what is apparently the very opposite to this glory, viz. his own outwardly oppressed and suffering state in the present age of the world, because in such tribulation the faith upon which that hope rests is approved as genuine and enduring.—*Experience* should be “proof:” Tribulation is set forth as a test of faith. If it is borne patiently, without murmuring against God, belief in the faithfulness and truthfulness of God is proved in it. And from this proving, hope of the future glory comes forth confirmed and victorious.

5. *Hope maketh not ashamed*: The right hope of the justified, resting upon faith, puts them not to shame, but proceeds without fail to fulfilment.—“Is poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit:” i.e. the Spirit of God has been poured into the hearts of the believers, and this Holy Spirit which has been poured out upon them and imparted to them, is a pledge to them of the divine love, which, just as it has already given righteousness to them, will now further give them the inheritance of the Messianic glory (see vv. 9 sqq.). Inasmuch as the Holy Spirit which is poured out upon the justified gives to them the certainty of the divine love, it is said of this love itself that it is poured out in their hearts. The Spirit is indeed the spirit of the divine love itself which now bears sway in them. It should be noticed that, according to the apostle’s view, the work of redemption consists of two parts, the absolution of the sinner from guilt, and the communication of the Spirit of God to those who are justified. The former is the condition of the new religious relation to God (the relation of children), the latter is the condition of the new life which is to be perfected in the glory that is to come.

6. Read, “For even Christ, while we were still weak, at the appointed time died for ungodly men.”—In proof of the proposition that the love of God has been poured out in our hearts, the apostle further shows that God has already proved this love by the expiatory death of the Messiah, and that therefore He will all the more make us partakers of the life of His Son in the future kingdom of God. If the death of Christ for sinners is the practical manifestation now given to us of the divine love, in this love



we have also a pledge that when the time comes it shall stand the test at the last judgment.—“For Christ, while we were still weak . . . died for ungodly men:” The divine proof of love already given to us in the present consists in this, that, at a time when we were still weak, i.e. because of the flesh were incapable of fulfilling the will of God, Christ died for ungodly (properly not pious, see iv. 5) men.—“While we were still weak:” This points to the earlier period under the dominion of the flesh, in opposition to the present position of believers, when the Spirit of God has been poured out upon them.—“For ungodly men:” i.e. not only for those who were weak, but even for those who were sinners in the sight of God.—“At the appointed time:” at the time appointed by the divine love. Therefore the same love will likewise give us the Messianic glory in the time appointed by it.

7, 8. Read, “For scarcely does any one die for a righteous man; that is, it is for the sake of the good surely that any one undertakes to die. But God showeth his love towards us, in that,” &c.—Here is introduced in passing the justification of the thought that Christ died for impious men, or sinners. If it had not been so, there would have been no purpose in his death; for no one dies *for a righteous man*; such a one would be himself secure of deliverance from judgment and of future glory, and would not need to be made a partaker in it by the sacrificial death of another. If, therefore, there were a possibility of righteousness in oneself, as the Jews suppose, Christ would have died for nought and in vain.—“For the sake of the good:” for the sake of that good with which alone we are here concerned, and to which all things must serve for those who love God (viii. 28); in order to provide righteousness and life, that is, for others.—“Any one undertakes to die:” it is worth while for any one to die. Hence the sacrificial death of Christ can only have this purpose.

8. “But now God showeth his love:” In this very fact that it was while we were still sinners that Christ died for us, is found the practical manifestation of the love of God towards us. Consequently we may also hope for the further confirmation of this love.—*His love*: strictly “his own love,” as distinguished from the love which Christ has proved by his death. The death

of Christ is not simply his own act of love, but also is ordained by the loving will of God.

9. *Much more then*: reasoning from the greater to the less. Since we have now been justified by his blood (ver. 1), we shall all the more be “preserved from the wrath” (not simply *from wrath*); i.e. delivered from the wrath of God which will be revealed in the last judgment.

10. This verse further establishes the conclusion drawn in the preceding verse. For if God gave up His Son to death when we were still enemies in order to reconcile us to Himself, much more will He allow us to reap the benefit of the life of the risen Christ, now that we have been reconciled with Him.—*Enemies*: i.e. enemies of God. God could not but regard us as His enemies because of our sins; there was between Him and us a relation of mutual hostility.—*Reconciled*: this is regarded not only as a reconciliation of men with God, but at the same time a reconciliation of God with man, inasmuch as God no longer directs His wrath against those who are no longer His enemies but now have peace with Him.—*Be saved*: i.e. from the wrath.—*By his life*: the life of the risen Christ, which is a pledge, to those who are reconciled, of their future life in the Messianic kingdom.

11. While the Jews, then, wrongly boasted of God (ii. 17) as their God of the covenant who had granted to them the Messianic inheritance, the believers have a right to such a boast [A.V. *joy*]. They have not only the well-founded hope of future glory, but they may even now boast of God as their Father who has called them to the Messianic inheritance. But with them this boasting is not founded upon their own excellence, but it is imparted *through our Lord Jesus Christ*, i.e. through him “through whom we have received the reconciliation” [A.V. *atonement*].—The nature and result of righteousness by faith, and so the new religious system, have now at last been fully developed.

#### v. 12—21. *Third Section of the First Sub-division.*

The final consideration which establishes the new religious system of a divine imputation of righteousness, and of the life of the one Christ, to the many believers by an historical comparison



with the transmission of the sin and death of Adam to the multitude of his descendants.

This section is no more intended than the conclusion of the preceding one (v. 1—11) to form a connecting link between the first and the second sub-divisions. Its object is simply, now that the complete exposition of the new religious system has been given, to justify to the religious consciousness of the Jewish Christians the result of the previous exposition, namely, the fundamental principle of the divine saving ordinance of an imputation or transmission to believers of the effect of Christ's death upon the cross and his resurrection.

12. *Wherefore*: Because reconciliation, and in addition deliverance from judgment, have been given to us as our own by grace through the death and resurrection of Christ, therefore the case is the same with this divine communication of righteousness and life as with the transmission of Adam's sin and death to all men. —*As by one man*: There is no second clause corresponding to this. The complete sentence should have been, As by one man sin came into the world, and through sin death, so by one man righteousness came into the world, and through righteousness life. Instead of this, the second member of the comparison is only shortly hinted at at the end of ver. 14, and then taken up again in a new form in vv. 15 sqq.—*By one man*: i.e. by Adam, comp. ver. 14. The words refer to Gen. iii., and develope the idea that Adam by his sin brought sin and death upon his whole race. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xv. 45—49), Paul contrasts Adam and Christ as the earthly man whose nature is only that of a "soul," not of a "spirit," and the heavenly man who is spirit. According to the doctrine of the apostle found elsewhere, man who is only flesh animated by a soul, but not yet in possession of the divine spirit, sins of necessity. Hence it might appear that even here Adam is represented, not as the cause of the sin and death of the whole race, but only as the first of the series of sinners, or as the one in whom the sin which is necessarily involved in the fleshly nature of man was first manifested. But this would destroy the whole force of the comparison which follows, for a corresponding conception of Christ would overthrow the whole Pauline doctrine of redemption. Paul does not trouble

himself to adjust what he now says to the requirements of his doctrine of the origin of sin as found elsewhere. He simply takes up the position of Judaism, and endeavours from it to establish his principle of the transmission of righteousness and life from the one to the many, by a comparison with the transmission of sin and death from the one to the many which actually takes place according to Jewish doctrine itself. It is only thus that the comparison between Adam and Christ here established can have any meaning, and its proper place in the general context of the Epistle.—*Sin entered into the world*: Adam's sinful deed is represented as the cause why sin now operates in humanity as a power which no one can escape. By *sin*, we are to understand neither "actual sin" nor, strictly speaking, "original sin" (as an inherited disposition to sin on the part of the individual), but evil represented as a personal power which by means of the flesh has dominion over man (see also ver. 21).—*And death by sin*: According to Gen. ii. 17 (comp. Rom. vii. 24; 1 Cor. xv. 56). Death, like sin, is represented as a power having dominion over man (comp. vv. 14, 17). By *death*, the opposite to the life which is brought through Christ, we must understand, not "spiritual death" (inner insusceptibility to the good), nor simply physical death alone, but *eternal death*, permanent exclusion from the life and glory of the Messianic kingdom, i.e. physical death without resurrection to the eternal life.—*And so death passed upon all men*: Instead of saying, And so sin and death have passed upon all men, the apostle takes the universal spread of death, the indisputable fact in our experience, as his main idea, and afterwards introduces the universal spread of sin in consequence of the fall of Adam, as the explanation of it.—*For that all have sinned*: The meaning of these much-tormented words cannot be that all individuals are liable to death because of their own actual sins or transgressions of the Law. This would be inconsistent with ver. 14 and the whole aim of this section, which assumes a causal connection between the sin and death of Adam, and the sin and death of the whole race. The meaning is this: that all were subjected to the power of sin in consequence of Adam's actual sin, even supposing that their sinfulness was never actually manifested in definite transgressions of the Law. This universal sinfulness caused by Adam is the



ground of the universal prevalence of death. The idea, then, is not that Adam's sin was only imputed outwardly to his descendants as theirs, without their having been actually subjected to the power of sin. The case is similar to that of the righteousness of Christ (vv. 15—19), which is not simply imputed outwardly to the believers. As in the verses that follow (15—19), Christ's act of grace is the cause of the actual transmission to believers of justification, i.e. forgiveness of sins and the relation of children to God, so here Adam's act of sin is the cause of the actual extension of the dominion of sin over his descendants. But the comparison between these two cannot be completely carried out, inasmuch as Adam's sin indeed actually makes his descendants sinners, so that the dominion of death over them is really due to their own sinfulness; while the result of the expiatory death of Christ is not, in the first instance, a *making* righteous (in the moral sense), but a *declaring* righteous, of those who are actually sinners, from which righteousness in the moral sense is afterwards to proceed. We must consider, however, that the immediate question here is not the representation of moral conditions but of religious relations.

13. Here the apostle breaks off the comparison which he had himself introduced in ver. 12, and only takes it up again in ver. 15, and then from a different point of view. Vv. 13, 14, contain a closer definition of the first member of the comparison, bringing out more definitely the resemblance between the effect proceeding from Adam and that proceeding from Christ. The last words of ver. 14, "who is a figure," &c., take up the comparison again. [Hence the marks of parenthesis before ver. 13 and after ver. 17 should be omitted.]

13, 14. These verses are not so much intended to prove that the universality of death is actually due to Adam's guilt, as to justify the assertion that all have actually sinned in consequence of Adam's sin. For even before the Law, sin was in the world as the ruling power over individuals in the world. But where there is no law, it is not counted to the individual as personal guilt or transgression of the Law (and hence the individuals were not punished with death for their *personal* transgression of the Law), but death manifested itself, from Adam to Moses, as a universal ruling power even over those who had not, like Adam, transgressed

a definite commandment. Consequently, as a matter of fact, all have been subjected to the deadly dominion of sin by Adam's act of sin. The objection that, according to this, in ver. 12 the universality of death is proved from the universality of sin, while in vv. 13, 14, the universality of sin is proved from the universality of death, and that therefore the argument moves in a circle, must be acknowledged, but it does not compel us to relinquish the above explanation. For in ver. 12 the words, "because all have sinned," only supply the hypothesis which is logically required by a given fact of experience; while, on the other hand, in vv. 13, 14, the justice of the hypothesis is shown from the fact adduced. But if, instead of accepting this explanation, we suppose that the universality of death was here intended to be referred to Adam's guilt, then the argument would be as follows: The personal sins of the descendants of Adam could not explain the universality of death. There was, indeed, sin in the world before the Law. But this could not be reckoned personally against individuals, because it never was made manifest as a transgression of definite commandments. Nevertheless, death ruled from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not transgressed a definite commandment after the manner of Adam. Consequently it is not the actual sin of individuals, but Adam's sin, that is the cause of the universality of death. In this latter explanation one is compelled skilfully to twist the meaning of the words, "because all have sinned," which then interfere with the argument, or at best to leave them out of sight as a somewhat superfluous addition, considering how the argument proceeds.—*Until the law*: i.e. in the period anterior to the delivery of the Mosaic Law.—*Sin is not imputed*: i.e. not reckoned by God as the personal transgression of the individual. The context forbids us to understand this to refer to the inner accusation of conscience.

14. *From Adam to Moses*: In the time before Moses, death was just as universal as afterwards.—*That had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression*: These men are not declared sinless, but it is only said that they had not, like Adam, transgressed a definite divine commandment (Gen. ii. 17). Of course the apostle elsewhere acknowledges even of those who sinned without law (Rom. ii. 12) that they knew God's will, and there-



fore were justly punished for their guilt (see i. 20, ii. 14 sq.).—*Who is the figure* (strictly “a figure”) *of him that was to come*: Adam is a type of Christ, inasmuch as in both cases there is a transmission from the one to the many.

#### v. 15—17.

It is now shown that the transmission of righteousness and of life from the one to the many is *much more credible* than the similar transmission of sin and death. If, therefore, the similarity in the nature of the transmission cannot but incline the Jewish-Christian mind to the acceptance of the divine plan of salvation announced by the apostle, the dissimilarity in the substance of that which was transmitted can only confirm this inclination all the more. In the one case it is a transgression, in the other an act of grace, that constitutes the cause of the transmission. In the one case, that which is transmitted from the one to the many is death; in the other case, a gift of grace. In the one case, judgment, which leads to condemnation, proceeds from the transgression of the one; in the other case, the gift of grace, which leads to justification, proceeds from the transgressions of many. If the shortcoming of one became the cause of the dominion of death, it is all the more possible that those who through the one, Jesus Christ, have received the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness, should become partakers of life and of dominion in the Messianic kingdom that is to come.

15. *The offence*: not sin regarded as a power (as in vv. 12, 13), but the individual sinful act.—*The free gift*: properly “the gift of grace.” Most emphatically the apostle brings forward the fact that that which we become partakers of in Christ is a manifestation of grace. Where it is a question of a divine gift of grace, the transmission from one to others is incomparably more conceivable than where it is a question of the results of human sin.—*For if, &c*: strictly “For if through the offence of the one the many died.” The sinful act of the one became the cause of the death of the many, inasmuch as they were made sinners through him.—“Much more did the grace and gift of God abound to the many:” Instead of the effect of the act of grace, the life of the many, being now opposed to the effect of the act of sin, the death of the many, the fact is first brought forward that it is a

manifestation of divine *grace*, which is given through the one, Christ, to the many.—“The one man Jesus Christ:” In both cases it is a man whose act determines the lot of many. But in the one case it is the offence of the one man that involves the death of the many; in the other case it is God’s grace which abundantly manifests itself in the act of grace of the one man.

16. *And not as it was by the one that sinned so is the gift: i.e. the gift of grace is not like that which was occasioned by one sinner; for while the judgment which leads to condemnation proceeds only from one, who had sinned, the gift of grace, on the contrary, proceeds from the sins of many.* The verse introduces an additional mark of dissimilarity. Where God judges in accordance with strict justice, the sin of a single one is sufficient to bring the sentence of condemnation upon many, but at the same time it is in these sins of many that the divine grace finds occasion for the sentence of justification.—*Is of many offences unto justification: i.e. proceeding from many offences leads to a sentence of justification.* The substance of the sentence is the righteousness awarded by it.

17. The main thought of vv. 15, 16, is again demonstrated.—*One man’s: properly “the sin of the one.”—By one: “by the one,”* emphatically repeated in order once more to lay stress upon the causal connection.—*Much more they which receive . . . shall reign in life:* From the communication of righteousness is further inferred the impending communication of eternal life in the Messianic kingdom (comp. v. 9 sqq.). Reigning in life is emphatically opposed to subjection to death. Life in the Messianic kingdom is at the same time participation in the universal Messianic dominion (see note on iv. 13).

#### v. 18, 19.

The result of the discussion in vv. 12—17 is, once more, clearly summed up.

18. *Therefore as by the offence, &c.: strictly, “Therefore as through the offence of one, a sentence of condemnation upon all men was arrived at.”—By the righteousness of one:* What is meant here is again (comp. ver. 16) the substance of the divine sentence of justification pronounced upon the one, and this is the righteousness of this one, recognized by God. This righteousness



of Christ consists in his obedience, proved by his death upon the cross (comp. ver. 19). His resurrection from the dead is the result of the divine sentence of justification in which this righteousness of Christ is acknowledged.—“Even so by the righteousness of one, the justification of life (which extends) over all men (has been arrived at):” *Justification* is the sentence of justification as a divine act; *justification of life*, the justification which leads to life.—*All men*: Jews and Gentiles without distinction.

19. [*One man* should be “the one man.”]—*Many were made sinners*: properly, “the many were set forth as sinners,” i.e. by the divine sentence.—*Shall many be made righteous*: properly, “shall the many be set forth as righteous,” i.e. at the last judgment. The divine sentence, then, in both cases pronounces the transmission from the one to the many; in the former case the transmission of the sin, in the latter of the righteousness. Hence the former are condemned as sinners who are subject to the divine wrath, and the latter, as righteous (i.e. absolved from guilt), are declared heirs of eternal life.

#### v. 20, 21.

The final result is now given from the preceding discussion, as regards the religious significance of the Law considered, according to the Jewish-Christian view, as a source of righteousness and life; and hence at the same time the result as regards the relation of the “righteousness of God,” proclaimed by Paul, to the “unrighteousness of men” which is only increased by the Law. The Law is simply to increase actual sins in the time between Adam and Christ, and so at the same time to increase the power of the sin which had been in the world since the time of Adam. But when sin had become powerful, grace became still more powerful, in order that, as previously sin manifested its power in the universal prevalence of death, so grace may the more manifest its power by the communication of the righteousness which leads to eternal life, and which is imparted to us through Christ.

20. *The law entered*: properly, “came in beside,” i.e. it does not mark any special crisis in the period between Adam and Christ, but is in that period only of subsidiary importance as increasing the sin which had already existed in the world since the time of

Adam.—*That the offence might abound* : i.e. that actual sin might be increased (comp. Gal. iii. 19). The definite commandment always provokes new transgressions. Hence this is adduced as the divine purpose in the entrance of the Law. Sin was not to be brought into existence by the Law, but it was to be made manifest by it in all its fearful power, so that in opposition to the “unrighteousness of men,” which was now completely brought to light, the “righteousness of God” might manifest itself as the only possible way of salvation. This idea is connected with the similar idea somewhat differently expressed, that the Law was intended to make men conscious of sin (comp. iii. 20, vii. 13).—*But where sin abounded* : i.e. where the power of sin was increased. The more the several actual sins are multiplied, and the more general sin after the manner of Adam’s transgression as an offence against distinct divine commands (see ver. 14) becomes, the greater does the power of sin in the world show itself to be.

21. It is the divine intention that where sin has displayed all its power, grace shall show itself much more powerful. For this reason it was not revealed until “the appointed time” (see ver. 6), after the Law had fulfilled the task divinely appointed to it.—*As sin hath reigned unto death* [lit. “As sin reigned in death”] (i.e. as sin has revealed its power by causing death), “so also grace may reign through righteousness unto eternal life :” To the ruling power of sin is now to be opposed the greater ruling power of grace. This happens inasmuch as grace bestows righteousness, i.e. absolution from guilt before the judgment of God, and so makes it possible for those who are pronounced righteous to be received into eternal life. But the historical channel of this work of grace is *Jesus Christ our Lord*. With these concluding words, the rhetorical colouring of which is unmistakable, the apostle has brought to a termination the whole first sub-division of his Epistle, the demonstration of the “righteousness of God” to the *religious* consciousness of the Jewish Christian, and at the same time he has shown from every point of view the religious right of the Pauline gospel to the Gentiles.

vi.—viii. *Second Sub-division of the First Division.*

Demonstration of the new system of the “righteousness of God” to the *moral* consciousness of the Jewish Christian.



These chapters (vi.—viii.) by no means contain only a simple practical application of the doctrinal ideas developed in the first sub-division (i.—v.), but are intended to meet a new and serious difficulty which the Jewish Christians found from a moral point of view in the gospel of righteousness by faith. They therefore form an essential part of the defence and establishment of this gospel. The apostle intends to show that righteousness by faith, as he proclaims it, far from overthrowing the moral requirements of the Law, renders possible the liberation of man from the power of sin, which was impossible to the Law, and thus exempts the believer from all condemnation by the Law. Hence the false conclusion is first rejected, which the opponents draw from the Pauline doctrine, that one ought to continue to sin in order that grace may be the more gloriously manifested. With this view, the apostle shows that by baptism into the death of Christ the power of sin is broken in them that believe, so that they ought now to live a new life for God in communion with the risen Christ (vi. 1—14). By their liberation, then, from the dominion of sin, they have entered into the service of righteousness, and hence grace leads to eternal life just as surely as sin leads to death. As having died to sin, that is to say, they are at the same time dead to the Law, and in its place have entered the service of the Risen, the service not of the letter but of the spirit (vi. 15—vii. 6). But, on the other hand, the converse is equally true, that the man who is subject to the Law always remains at the same time subject to sin (vii. 7—25). From this the apostle passes on to give an account of the new life in righteousness, which being established by the sway of the spirit of Christ in the believers, makes them capable of fulfilling the moral requirements of the Law, and affords them a practical pledge of their future life in the Messianic glory (viii.). The peculiar Pauline theology reaches its climax in these three chapters, the apostle now proceeding to sketch the outlines of a new moral system which aims at explaining the new life in righteousness revealed in Christ from the nature of the matter itself, from the great antitheses of flesh and Spirit, dominion of sin and sway of the Spirit, external enthrallment to the Law and inner liberty of the “sons of God.”

vi., vii. *First Section of the Second Sub-division.*

Rejection of the objection of the opponents.

## vi. 1—14.

Argument that the baptized, as having died with Christ to sin, must now also be partakers of the new life of the risen Christ.

1. This verse is immediately connected with the result stated in the preceding verses. The proposition that the object of the Law is only to increase sin in order that grace may prevail, seems fully to confirm the objection to the apostle's doctrine which has already been touched upon (iii. 8), viz. that it would follow from it that one should do evil in order that good may come, or so that grace may be the more abundantly shown.—*What shall we say then?* (see note on iv. 1). The question introduces a false conclusion which the opponents draw from the Pauline doctrine.

2. *God forbid:* (see note on iii. 4).—*How shall we, &c:* strictly, “We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?” The conclusion of the opponents is altogether impossible.—“Died:” this is not to be understood of any moral proceeding (the renunciation of all fellowship with sin); that is regarded as a result of having died to sin, not as identical with it. What is meant here is something that took place in the believers at baptism, viz., as ver. 3 shows, the divine transmission of the death of Christ to those who are baptized, so that Christ's death is also their death.

3. Read, “Or know ye not that all of us who have been baptized unto the Christ, Jesus, have been baptized unto his death?” —“Or know ye not?” explains the startling proposition that we have died to sin, by a fact known to all readers. Baptism unto the Messiah, Jesus, or unto Jesus as the Christ, is a baptism unto the Crucified, and hence, as Paul immediately states more exactly, a baptism unto his death, or unto the saving efficacy of his death. This saving efficacy, however, consists in the fact that Christ died for our sins, or, as it is more definitely stated in ver. 10, died to sin.—“Who have been baptized unto the Christ, Jesus:” The older form of baptism was simply unto Jesus as the Christ (or Messiah). Baptism unto Father, Son and Holy Spirit, did not come into use until a later date.



4. "Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism unto death" [the best MSS. read, "his death"]. This, according to the apostle, is really, and not merely figuratively, what baptism means. The immersion of the person baptized in water (this was the original form of baptism) represents what actually takes place in the person baptized at the time when the symbolical ceremony is performed. By baptism unto Christ's death, the person baptized is buried with Christ, Christ's death is appropriated to him as his own death. Hence if Christ died to sin, then those who are baptized in Christ and with Christ have likewise died to sin. The power of sin over them which the carnal man was utterly unable to escape is in the act of baptism, not only figuratively, but actually broken. Baptism is to the apostle a mystery, in which the saving power of the death of Jesus is transfused in a supernatural manner into believers. In ver. 6, it is described as a crucifixion of our old man with Christ. And this, again, is not to be understood in a moral sense, but quite strictly of a slaying of our flesh, the natural foundation of the old Ego, so that this flesh is henceforth no longer able to domineer over the will according to its own passions and desires.—*That like as Christ was raised up from the dead . . . even so we also should walk in newness of life*: As, in the symbolic act, immersion is followed by emergence from the water, so it is the divine purpose of baptism that from the death of the Ego which was under the dominion of sin there should proceed a new Ego walking in a new spiritual life. Dying to sin, or the crucifixion of the old man, is only one side of the miraculous occurrence, to which the resurrection of a new man, no longer subject to the dominion of the flesh and of sin, must correspond as the other side. This resurrection of the new man, again, is not in the first place to be understood morally but literally, and it takes place, as is shown in chap. viii. more fully, through the communication of the spirit of Christ, which is likewise a supernatural process in man, the miraculous introduction of a new Ego born of the spiritual nature of God and Christ. This other side of the matter is the baptism of the spirit, which, according to the apostle, is effected by the resurrection of Christ, just as much as the dying to sin which takes place in the baptism of water is effected by the death of Christ upon the cross. Here the communication of

the spirit is not expressly mentioned, because the apostle is still occupied with the confutation of the complaints of his opponents. The closer description of the way in which this "walking in newness of life" is realized, is reserved for another part of the Epistle.—*In newness of life*: The apostle does not yet give utterance to any admonition (this follows in ver. 12), but only states what God further purposed to impart to us through baptism unto the death of Christ. Our walking in newness of life (being based upon the communication of the spirit) is as much an act of God as the raising of Christ from the dead, which ensued "through the glory of the Father," i.e. through the celestial light of the Father which was imparted to Christ in his resurrection.

5. Read, "For if we have become united with the likeness of his death, we shall also be (united) with his resurrection."—This verse proceeds to establish the purpose of baptism unto the death of Christ expressed in ver. 4, on the ground that as we have entered into mysterious communion with the death of Christ, so we shall enter into mysterious communion with his resurrection. It is in the newness of life, which is imparted to us by God in baptism, that the saving power of the resurrection of Christ is carried into effect.—"For if we have become united with the likeness of his death:" If by the imitation of his death in baptism we have entered into a mysterious connection with it.—"We shall also be (united) with his resurrection:" We shall also one day be made like him in the resurrection. This future resurrection with Christ, the hope of which is awarded to us in baptism, is a pledge even now to walk in newness of life, inasmuch as the same spirit of Christ which will then be the means of our resurrection to a life in heavenly glory, already lives in us as a new Ego.

6. Here we have the ground of our expectation that we shall be partakers of the fellowship of the resurrection of Christ as well as of his death. Our old man has been crucified with Christ in order that this fleshly body which is subject to sin may be slain and its independent impulses destroyed, and that so we may no longer remain subject to the dominion of sin. Consequently we shall also arise with Christ to a new life which is already being carried out in us. (Usually ver. 6 is regarded as adducing a motive for walking in a new life).—*Our old man*: our old natural Ego, the essence of which is in the flesh, which is



under the dominion of sin.—*Is crucified*: properly, “was crucified,” viz. by baptism unto the death of Christ upon the cross.—*That the body of sin might be destroyed*: lit. “made inoperative;” i.e. that its independent movements might be destroyed. The earthly body, subject as such to sin, continues to exist indeed after baptism as before, and is not exchanged for a new and spiritual body until the resurrection. But the crucifixion of the old man is even now to result in this body no longer exercising its own life in the satisfaction of its sinful impulses.

7. *For he that is dead is freed* (lit. “has been justified”) *from sin*: a proposition of universal application. As, according to the most wide-spread view of justice, the penalty of death expiates the guilt of the criminal, so those who have died with Christ are thereby absolved from sin. The verse explains in what way the crucifixion of the old man can be destined to do away with the body of sin, and so to put an end to the slavery under sin. As having died, we are absolved from sin by a divine sentence, i.e. we are declared entirely free from its service. What is meant is not, in the first instance, being set free by God from condemnation to death.

8. The argument is here continued: “But if we died with Christ” (i.e. have been absolved from every obligation to sin), “we believe that we shall also live with him,” i.e. partake of the new undecaying life of the risen Christ. As this life with Christ is still described as the subject of believing hope, it can, again, only be the life of the resurrection that is meant, regarded, however, as a new spiritual life of those who are freed from the dominion of sin, a life which must, therefore, even now have the effect of preventing us from giving sin any further power over ourselves.

9, 10. The assurance of this faith is here based upon the undecaying life of the risen Christ, who, having once for all died to sin, now lives only for God.—*Knowing* (i.e. “since we know”) *that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more*: The life of the risen Christ is undecaying; whosoever therefore is a partaker in the fellowship of his resurrection, his life will likewise be without decay.—*Hath no more dominion*: i.e. “no longer hath dominion.”—“For that which he died [i.e. the death which he died] he died unto sin once” [strictly, once for all]: This esta-

blishes the proposition that death has henceforth no dominion over him ; for the sole cause of death is sin, but to this he died once for all upon the cross. He died to sin (viii. 3), inasmuch as he slew upon the cross the sinful flesh which he also had assumed, and so condemned the ruler of the flesh, sin itself, to death. Sin is here, as throughout the whole context, represented as a personal ruling power.—“But that which he lives [i.e. “the life which he lives”] he lives unto God :” but life for God is an undecaying life.

11. Read, “And so reckon ye also that ye yourselves (like Christ) are dead unto sin, but are alive unto God,” &c.: In the form of an application to believers of that which has been predicated of Christ, the argument is now brought to the conclusion, that they will no longer walk in sin but in a new life. If we, as partakers in the fellowship of the resurrection of Christ, shall live with Christ, our life also is a life for God, free from sin.—“Reckon ye also :” properly, come to this conclusion, i.e. recognize this state of things as established.—*Dead unto sin* : i.e. once for all.—*Alive unto God* : even now, by virtue, that is, of the spirit of the risen Christ that has been bestowed upon them. This life unto God, however, in them as in Christ, is an undecaying life.

## vi. 12—14.

The practical application of the preceding statement of the actual state of things now follows. If as a matter of fact, through the death and resurrection of Christ, we have died to sin and entered into life for God, the admonition follows as a matter of course, no longer to let sin reign.

12. *Let not sin therefore reign*: From the fact that those who have been baptized into the death of Christ have died to sin, follows in the first place only the abolition of actual subjection to it, or the possibility of suppressing it, and not at once the impossibility of sinning.—*In your mortal body* : this flesh body, with its members, had hitherto been the seat of sin. So long as the believers are burdened with this mortal body, which, like everything earthly, is subject to decay, it is still always possible that sin may again take possession of it. But just because this body will be subject to death, we must not obey its lusts, which would again bring it under the power of sin.—*It in*, should be omitted.



13. *Neither yield ye your members . . . unto sin*: do not place them at the service of sin.—*As instruments* (or “weapons”) *of unrighteousness*: weapons by the bearing of which *unrighteousness* is shown to be the natural constitution of man, or instruments which the unrighteous use in the service of sin, and by means of which unrighteous deeds (i.e. deeds opposed to the divine will) are committed.—*But yield yourselves unto God*: i.e. place yourselves at the service of God.—*Instruments* (or “weapons”) *of righteousness*: Righteousness, as the new religious state established by God, is here at the same time regarded as a moral condition of the justified, in which they use their members in the service of God, or for the fulfilment of the divine will.

14. Sin will not be able to compel you to its service if you do not voluntarily enter its service. But those who believe have this liberty because they are *not under the law, but under grace*. For it is over those who are “under the law” that sin also exercises its dominion (as is explained more in detail in vii. 7 sqq.); whereas grace has destroyed this power in baptism unto the death of Christ, and by participation in his resurrection has rendered those who have been baptized capable of a new life. Hence that very appeal to the divine grace, which in the eyes of the opponents justified their serious moral objections to the Pauline doctrine, serves, according to the apostle, to prove that he who believes, instead of trusting in grace and continuing to sin, has been set free by grace from the dominion of sin, from which he has never been free before.

#### vi. 15—23.

From the very time when we ceased to be under the Law and came under grace, we have been made servants of righteousness, instead of servants of sin; and instead of death, which is the wages of sin, we receive through grace eternal life.

15. Once more the objection to the Pauline gospel raised in ver. 1 is repeated, in order that, after what has been said in vv. 2—14, the apostle may be able again to reject it as altogether unfounded.—*Because we are not under the law, but under grace*: In ver. 14, Paul has shown that this very fact affords a reason why sin should no longer have dominion over those who believe. But this very opposition between law and grace which Paul assumes, previously provoked the opposition of Jewish Christianity.

16. In order to remove the objection of the opponents, Paul starts from the general proposition that when one has entered any one's service, one is really bound to serve him. Hence we either serve sin, or else we serve *obedience*, i.e. submit ourselves to the will of God for our salvation revealed in the gospel. In the one case, our service leads *unto death* (to perdition); in the other case, *unto righteousness*, i.e. to the actual establishment of the new life in those who are justified (see ver. 13).

## vi. 17—19.

But among the believers the decision has already been made. Having submitted themselves to the saving will of God, they have been set free from the service of sin, and have entered the service of righteousness. Consequently, as they formerly placed their members at the service of uncleanness and unrighteousness, and therefore came into a condition of unrighteousness, so now they ought to place their members at the service of righteousness, and so attain to holiness.

17. Though the apostle represents it as a matter of the free choice of man to which of the two services he will devote himself, still, according to vv. 3 sqq., it is only by baptism unto the Crucified and Risen that the service of righteousness has been made possible, and this is a work of grace. Hence the apostle says, *But God be thanked that ye were* (formerly, that is to say) *the servants of sin, but (now) ye have obeyed* ("become obedient to"), &c.: This new state of obedience, in opposition to the former servitude to sin, is therefore the subject of the thanksgiving to God to which utterance is here given.—*That form, &c.*, should be "the form of teaching to which ye were delivered," i.e. by God. This form of teaching is the gospel of the Crucified, which Paul can only apprehend in sharp opposition to the religion of the Law. In saying this, however, we by no means intend that the Romans should therefore be described as "Pauline Christians."

18. *Being then made free* (i.e. since you were made free by God) *from sin* (i.e. from servitude under sin), *ye became the servants of righteousness*: Here, again, *righteousness* appears not merely as a new religious relation, but at the same time as a new power of life, which manifests itself as working in those who are justified.

19. *I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of*



*your flesh*: a parenthesis to point out that the expression, *ye became the servants of righteousness*, which is not strictly applicable, has only been chosen on account of the weakness of his readers. The condition of those who have been baptized unto Christ, or the being "under grace," is in truth no servile state, but a state of liberty (comp. viii. 2 sqq.).—*For as ye have yielded, &c.*: These words, in the form of an explanation of ver. 18, really establish the practical moral conclusion, which clearly reveals the utter groundlessness of the objection brought by the apostle's opponents.—*To iniquity unto iniquity*: Iniquity is taken first as a power, and secondly as the state of the man who is under the dominion of this power.—*Unto holiness*: Holiness, i.e. the state of moral purity in which those are who are dedicated to God, is the goal of the "service of righteousness."

#### vi. 20—23.

The exhortation to the service of righteousness is again strengthened by a reference to the final outcome of the two kinds of service.

20. For formerly, when ye were still in the service of sin, of course ye were not yet bound to the service of righteousness. The words are a most incisive denial of the supposed righteousness under the Law which the opponents affirmed.

21. Read, "What fruit had ye then? (i.e. What fruit did that service of sin then bring you?) Things of which ye are now ashamed" (i.e. actions of sinful uncleanness). The apostle gives a speedy answer to the question that he has raised.—*Death*: eternal death (see note on v. 12).

22. *But now, &c.*: Now, however, since ye have been freed from sin, and instead have become servants of God.—*Ye have your fruit unto holiness*: The fruit of the service of God is the new life which is perfected in holiness, and has *everlasting life* as its final result. Hence eternal life, although it is a divine gift of grace (ver. 23), is regarded as a result of that "service of righteousness" which actually fulfils the moral demands of God. How this is possible is shown in chap. viii.

23. One more summing-up of the result attained, in which it is no longer the service of sin and the service of righteousness that are opposed to one another, but sin and grace. For the

service of righteousness also is a gift of grace.—*The wages of sin*: i.e. what you attain as merited by what you have done.—*The gift of God*: the gift of the divine grace, bestowed upon him who, without any merit of his own, is freed from the service of sin and made capable of the service of righteousness.

## vii. 1—6.

As having died with Christ we have been freed from the dominion of the Law and given to another Master, in order that our sinful passions may no longer bring death to us, as when we were under the Law, but the new service of the risen Christ may bring to us the communion of God.—The opposition set forth in vi. 14 between being “under the law” and “under grace,” had previously been taken as the opposition between the service of sin and the service of righteousness, and emancipation from the dominion of the Law as at the same time emancipation from the dominion of sin. The apostle, without in the first place closely establishing the equivalence of the two ideas of the dominion of sin and the dominion of the Law, proceeds to show, in immediate connection with what has preceded, that our previous service under the Law has actually come to an end, and that the new service of the risen Christ has taken its place, and that the aim of this change of service, completed upon the cross of Christ, is to substitute for the life of sin under the Law, which leads to death, a life which brings fruit for God; that is, to substitute for the service of the letter the service of the spirit. It is not till now that the line of thought begun in vi. 14 is brought to a temporary pause.

1. *Know ye not*, should be “Or know ye not:” The appeal to a principle familiar to readers who are acquainted with the Law (i.e. to Jewish Christians), is intended further to establish the idea that those who have died with Christ have, in so doing, really died to the Law, and so have left their previous service of the Law and entered a new service.—*For I speak to them that know the law*: His readers shall decide for themselves, from their own knowledge of the Law, what is the law in a given case.—*That the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth*. This is the universal principle of law by which the apostle desires to have the particular instance now under consideration decided.



2. An example from the Mosaic Law of the validity of the principle set forth in ver. 1. The wife is bound by the Law to her husband so long as he lives, and may form no connection with another. But when her husband is dead, she is free from this provision of the Law, and may without sin marry another. The figure is not altogether appropriate, inasmuch as it is not the man who dies that is set free from the Law, but the woman that is set free by the death of her husband. The apostle appears, indeed, to regard the woman herself as one dead to the Law, which refers to the husband, in consequence of the death of her husband. This suits very well with the idea which he wants to explain (that the baptized are dead to the Law), but only applies so much the less to the establishment of the legal principle set forth in ver. 1.—*From the law of her husband*: “from the law in regard to the husband.”

3. *Be married to another man*: strictly, “become another man’s,” both at the beginning and end of the verse.—*So that she is no adulteress*: so that she can no longer be condemned by the Law as an adulteress.

4. Application to believers of the legal principle above explained.—“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also” (like the woman in the example above given) “have been made dead to the Law:” The Law can no longer regard you as living; i.e. the provisions of the Law are no longer obligatory upon you. In ver. 5, this thought is co-ordinated with the thought that the Law as the goad of sin has fallen to the ground with sin itself. The idea of the dominion of the Law is again two-sided (see note on vi. 15). “Through the body of Christ:” by the death of the body of Christ upon the cross. By this death the obligation to the Law, under which men lie, has been vicariously fulfilled (iii. 24), or, according to the turn which the thought takes here, sinful flesh has been slain in the death of Christ, and so at the same time the Law as the goad of sin has been rendered powerless.—“That ye may become another’s:” not another husband’s (for the relation to the Law is not taken as that of marriage), but another master’s.—“Namely, his who has been raised from the dead:” whose service, therefore, has no further connection whatever with the service of the Law, inasmuch as he himself, since his resurrection from the dead, is no longer subject to the Law.—“That we may bring [or *bring*]

*forth*, as in A.V.] fruit unto God :” give Him practical evidence of our new life in the service of the Risen. The expression is chosen with reference to vi. 21 sqq., and not with reference to the illustration from marriage. The change to the first person should be noticed.

5, 6. Proof of the statement that the purpose of dying to the Law is that we may be given up to the service of the Risen, and thereby be rendered capable of a new service in the spirit, which, instead of leading to death, leads to life with God. For as long as we lived in the flesh, it was the Law itself which stirred up the sinful passions, and so brought us to death. So long, therefore, as we stood under the Law, we were liable to death ; but now by the death of our flesh we have escaped from the Law, so that now the new service of God in the spirit has taken the place of the old service of the letter.—*For when we were in the flesh* : The “flesh” has now been put to death upon the cross of Christ.—*The motions of sins* (“sinful passions”) *which were by the Law* : Of this effect of the Law, which was assumed in vi. 15, a fuller account follows.—“But now, since we have died, we are freed from the Law in which we were held :” “Since we have died” is opposed to the “when we were in the flesh” of ver. 5, and explains why we are freed from the Law. The translation “having died to it” (i.e. to the Law) is erroneous. [*That being dead* is the translation of an inferior reading.]—*In newness of (the) Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter* : The oldness of the letter is the subjection to the external provisions of the Law, the letter of the commandments. *The newness of the Spirit* is not so much a “fulfilment of the Law according to the Spirit,” as the new state, in which we are moved by the Spirit of God, into which we have been brought by the service of the risen Christ. Of course this whole comparison and contrast, again, has no meaning except for those who are Jews by birth.

#### vii. 7—25.

Proof that man under the dominion of the Law is also under the dominion of sin, inasmuch as the Law only excites the sin that dwells in our flesh. The apostle having hitherto employed the terms “dominion of sin” and “dominion of the Law” as synonymous, and indeed having distinctly said of the Law that



the sinful passions were excited by it (ver. 5), the conclusion, intolerable to the Jewish-Christian mind, might naturally be drawn, that Paul actually declared the Law itself to be sin. This misunderstanding is met by the following argument. The Law is in itself holy and good, but by its commandment it excites evil desires; hence sin takes occasion from the commandment to vanquish and slay man. The Law in itself is not the cause of death, but sin avails itself of the Law as a means to slay us, and in so doing is brought to light, in accordance with the divine purpose, in all its destructive power. This power of sin, however, is explained by our fleshly nature, by virtue of which we have been sold under sin, and although in our inner man approving of the Law and desiring to fulfil it, are unable to do so; so that except by redemption from this fleshly body, which is subject to death, we can never escape from this inner contest between will and action.

7. *What shall we say then?* see notes on iv. 1, vi. 1.—*Is the Law sin?* The ideas of dominion of the Law and dominion of sin being practically the same, it seems to the Jewish Christian that the Law itself is thereby declared to be "sin," i.e. evil.—"But I had not known sin except by the Law:" What is meant is not the consciousness of sinfulness in general aroused by the testimony of the Law, i.e. of the divine word of the Old Testament (iii. 20), but the experience of the power of evil in me aroused by the commandment, as we see at once by what follows. Sin is represented here again, and in what follows, as a personal power which obtains supremacy over man. The "I," who speaks here and in the following passage, of course means the man under the Law. It is the position of the moral consciousness of the Jew, who is bound to the Law, that Paul here describes from his own painful experience.—*For I had not known lust:* Without the Law man would not have experienced the power of evil in himself, for without the definite commandment he would have had no experience of the forbidden lust aroused by it.—"If the Law had not said, Thou shalt not lust" (Exod. xx. 17): The form of every provision of the Law is that of a prohibition or command meeting man from without.—[The word here rendered *lust* is the same that is employed in the Greek version of the commandment usually rendered in English, "Thou shalt not covet," &c.]

8. *But sin, &c.*: strictly, "But taking occasion, sin brought about every lust through the commandment." Sin only waits for the opportunity which the definite commandment offers, to arouse by it the desire of that which is forbidden.—"For without the Law, sin is dead" (not *was dead*): A general proposition. Sin requires the Law to make it alive, i.e. operative.

9. The human Ego and sin are contrasted with one another. Once man lived and sin was dead; then sin came to life and man died. In the description of this it is evident that the story of the Fall (Gen. iii.) is in the apostle's mind. The time when man still "lived" without the Law is scarcely the childhood of the individual, nor the time before the delivery of the Mosaic Law (see v. 13), but the time before the Fall. The apostle speaks here according to the historical religious ideas of the Jews.—*But when, &c.*: Read, "But when the commandment came (Gen. ii. 17), sin came to life" (Gen. iii. 6). Before this, sin was dead (see ver. 8), but through the commandment it was aroused to activity.—*And I died*: According to the traditional interpretation of Gen. ii. 17 (comp. Gen. iii. 22), the divine threat against man was fulfilled by his being deprived of the immortality which he would otherwise have attained. This meant in the first instance physical death; but what Paul means by it is eternal death, or physical death without resurrection (see note on v. 12).

10. *Which was ordained to life*: "which was given to me unto life" [lit. "which was unto life"]: compare the express promise of Levit. xviii. 5 ["Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, which if a man do he shall live in them"] with the narrative of Gen. ii. 9 sqq.

11. Comp. Gen. iii. 1—5. The expression *deceived me* is taken from Gen. iii. 13. What is there narrated of the serpent is here transferred to sin.—*And by it slew me*: see note on ver. 10.

12. Here the conclusion is drawn from the discussion in vv. 7—11.—*Wherefore the Law is holy*: strictly, "accordingly the Law is holy indeed." The "but" which should correspond to this "indeed" is wanting; the thought is completed differently in ver. 13. If, then, the Law is holy, the objection implied in the question whether the Law be sin (ver. 7) is refuted.

13. From the position now reached another objection is raised. If the Law be holy and good, it seems to follow that this



good, which was destined indeed, according to the divine purpose, to serve me unto life, has, on the contrary, conduced to my death and so produced the greatest evil,—a thought as intolerable as that God should be the cause of evil. This conclusion, again, is supposed to be drawn by the Jewish Christian. *But sin, &c.*: strictly, “But sin that it might appear sin (i.e. that its nature as evil might be made apparent by its evil effects) (brought about my death), working death to me through that which is good.”—*That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful*: If sin itself reveals its own evil nature by producing so evil an effect, much more will it do so by actually misusing that which is itself good (viz. the Law) for the production of evil.

## vii. 14—20.

More detailed explanation of the way in which sin through the Law works death in man. It is due to my fleshly nature, by virtue of which I am subjected to the power of sin, against my own better knowledge and will. The “I,” here again, is man generally as he appears to the Jewish mind, man under the Law apart from the redemption brought by Christ.

14. *Spiritual*: inasmuch as it is derived from God, and its contents are consequently holy and good.—*But I am carnal*: not of a fleshly disposition, but of a fleshly nature, “fleshen,” so to speak (see pp. 31 sqq.). Even apart from the communication of the divine spirit, Paul of course still distinguishes from the fleshly body the “inward man” (ver. 22), who is capable of recognizing the law of God as good, and of endeavouring to fulfil it. But as long as the Spirit of God is not implanted in man as a new Ego, all better knowledge and will on the part of the “inward man” remains practically ineffective. According to the apostle, this is due to the fact that man by nature not only *has* flesh but *is* flesh, so that the resistance of the inward man to the lusts of the flesh must remain ineffective.—*Sold under sin*: By virtue of his fleshly nature, man has been sold into the slavery of sin, and consequently is compelled to serve it even against his own will.

15. This verse establishes the fact that man through his fleshly nature has been sold into the slavery of sin.—“For I know not what I do:” I act not from reasonable discernment, but being

carried blindly away by the lust of the flesh.—“For I do not what I will, but what I hate that do I:” This explains how that which has just been said comes about. Inwardly man wills the good, that which the Law commands, and hates the evil; but his actual conduct is the very opposite to this, and is consequently blind, unreasonable action.

16. *I consent*, &c., should be “I agree that the Law is good.”—By the very fact that my action is in direct opposition to my own inmost inclination, I show my agreement that the Law is good. By my inner disinclination to evil, I give testimony to the goodness and beauty of the Law (comp. ver. 14). The inner objection to that which is evil and desire of that which is good (the accomplishment of which fails indeed), is here therefore expressly ascribed to man, even apart from the redemption in Christ. This acknowledgment is of course irreconcilable with Lutheran [and Calvinistic] doctrine, and hence “orthodox” interpretation, in palpable contradiction of the apostle’s actual meaning, refers the whole passage to the “regenerate,” or those who have been “born again.”

17. But then it is no longer I myself that perform that which I will not, but it is sin that dwells in me (and therefore it is sin, as an external power enslaving me, that has brought about my death, ver. 13).

#### vii. 18—20.

Further explanation of the thought, which is at first so startling, that it is not the Ego, but the sin which rules over the Ego, that produces the evil that man does.

18. Read, “For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing” (i.e. I know that I, inasmuch as I am of fleshly nature, do not possess the power to produce anything good), “for to will is present with me (lit. “lies before me,” i.e. is possible to me), but to perform that which is good is not.”

19, 20. For practically I do not the good that I desire to do but the very opposite. But if this is the case, it is no longer my own proper self (as it seemed before) that performs the evil, but sin which dwells as a master in me, and compels me as its slave to do that which is contrary to my own will.

#### vii. 21—23.

The result is, then, that although I would do the good, and after



the inward man delight in the law of God, I am nevertheless subject to the law, that I can only perform that which is evil, and so must serve a very different law from the law of God, viz. the law of sin which operates in my members, and which is opposed to that law which my reason recognizes as good and divine.

21. Read, "I find then a law in me who desire to do good, that evil is present with me."—"I find then a law in me:" what kind of law this is, is explained in ver. 23; it is the exact opposite to the "law of God," or the "law of my mind," viz. it is the "law of sin" which rules in my members. This law is, that I "who desire to do good" must of necessity do evil, because I am not a free man, but a slave of sin, which compels me to evil. *That evil is present with me:* lit. "lies before me" (same word as in ver. 18), i.e. only the performance of evil is possible to me.

22, 23. This "law," i.e. this necessity which is laid upon me is now further explained. Although I delight in the law of God after the inward man, yet I see another law, the "law of sin," ruling in my members.—*I delight in* (lit. "joyfully assent to") *the law of God* (i.e. the Law of Moses) *after the inward man:* While previously the Ego, regarded as enslaved to sin in all its action, was more closely defined as "my flesh" [ver. 18], here in the Ego two sides are distinguished, viz. "my inward man" and "my members." Regarded from the side of its reasonable consciousness, the Ego inwardly assents to the law of God, but in its outward actions it is enthralled to the opposite law of sin through the operations of the members of its fleshly body.—*The law of my mind:* i.e. of my reasonable inner consciousness. Such reasonable inner consciousness is expressly attributed by the apostle to the natural or carnal man, even before he has become a new creature through the Spirit of God.—*The law of sin:* the law described in ver. 21, which sin has imposed upon the Ego which is sold to it. This law is *in my members*, inasmuch as sin makes use of the members of my body as the instruments of its will. The "law of sin in my members," into which or under which "the other law in my members" brings me "into captivity," is of course not distinct from this "other law." Paul only means to say, the necessity which rules in my members brings me under the dominion of sin. Nor, again, is the *law of my mind*

distinct from the *law of God*; but what is meant by the former is, the law of God determining our reasonable consciousness, and moving us to acknowledge the beauty of its commands and to desire to fulfil them.

## vii. 24, 25.

24. The result of the preceding consideration is this, that it is not the law of God that has brought about my death, but it is the sin ruling in my body which brings death to me by means of the Law, and even in spite of my delight in the Law. From this fatal slavery under the power of sin there is no other deliverance than that I should be delivered from the body itself, which by virtue of its carnal nature is in the power of sin and death. To this unhappy feeling, in which the religion of the Law necessarily ends, the apostle gives powerful expression in the cry of ver. 24, doubtless with painful reference to his own past experience. This bitter cry is, however, at the same time the expression of that sentence which the apostle compels the Jewish consciousness to pass upon itself.—*From the body of this death*, should be “From this body of death,” i.e. from this body which is subject to death.

25. *I thank God*: according to another reading, “Thanks be to God.” The bitter cry of the man under the Law is answered by the triumphant cry of the man redeemed through Christ. Thanks be to God for His grace imparted through Christ, which has actually redeemed us from this body of death. The redemption from the death which sin has brought upon us is a redemption from this fleshly body, which is subject to death, through the death of Christ upon the cross (see vi. 2 sqq.).—*So then, &c.*: better, “I myself, therefore, with my mind serve the law of God,” &c.—*I myself*: independently of the grace revealed in Christ. The conclusion is, that man of himself without grace never escapes from that state of unhappy consciousness, which has been described, in which his actual conduct is always in contradiction to his reasonable will.

viii. *Second Section of the Second Sub-division.*

The apostle has now refuted the objection of the opponents, that his gospel of righteousness by faith opens every door to sin; first by showing that, on the contrary, through baptism unto



the death of Christ we have died to sin and the Law, and entered the service of righteousness which leads to eternal life (vi. 1—vii. 6), and then by a glance at life under the Law, which is captivity to sin. Now, therefore, he can proceed to the actual description of the new order of life, pointing out the new power of life, for those who have died and risen again with Christ, in the spirit of Christ which is imparted to them, whereby they have been exalted above every condemnation. It is this spirit which now renders them capable of fulfilling the moral requirements of the Law, and which at the same time assures them of their future glorious life as sons and heirs of God in the Messianic kingdom.

#### viii. 1—13.

Those who are in the communion of the Messiah, Jesus, are free from the dominion of sin and death, and animated by the spirit of the risen Christ, which already begets in them a new life wherein they actually fulfil the divine will; and this Spirit is at the same time a pledge to them of their future resurrection.

1. *There is therefore now no condemnation:* Because God, through Jesus Christ, has delivered us from this body of death, and so at the same time from servitude to sin, every occasion to condemnation through the Law has ceased.—*To them which are in Christ Jesus:* who through baptism unto the death of Jesus have entered into a mysterious communion with the crucified and risen Messiah, Jesus.—*Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit:* an interpolation [from ver. 4].

2. The reason why those who are in communion with Christ are no longer subject to condemnation. The place of the *law of sin and death* has been taken by another *law*, that of the living and life-giving spirit, in Christ Jesus. The expression “law” is not used in either case in its proper sense, but has been chosen with special reference to the Mosaic Law, under the dominion of which men became subject to the power of sin and death. Consequently the *law of sin and death* is not the Mosaic Law, but is the same that was previously spoken of as “the law of sin in my members” (vii. 23), i.e. the necessity, involved in the fleshly nature of our earthly body, of serving sin contrary to our will, and of thereby becoming subject to death.—*The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus:* The new order of life into which the

baptized have been introduced is the dominion in them of the divine spirit, the essence of which is life, and which itself consequently quickens in the double sense which is explained with more detail in vv. 10, 11. This new order of life has been established for us in *Christ Jesus*, i.e. by means of the communion with the Crucified and Risen into which we have entered.—*Hath made me free*: according to another reading, “hath made thee free.” Emancipation from the dominion of sin and death is here ascribed to the power of the Spirit, inasmuch as the work of redemption which was founded in the death of Christ upon the cross is only completed by the communication of the spirit of the risen Christ.

3. This emancipation is further established by the thought that it was by the death of the Son of God upon the cross that that was brought about which was impossible to the Mosaic Law because of the flesh; viz. the slaying of sin in the flesh and the implanting of the Spirit, in the strength of which we are now actually able to fulfil the moral requirements of the Law.—*In that it was weak through the flesh*, or “that in which it was weak through the flesh,” is added to explain the reason why the Law was not in a position to slay sin. Because of the flesh, it had no strength to do so. It could command and threaten, but it could not break the power of sin; indeed, on the contrary, sin took occasion, from the very commands of the Law, to enslave man (see vii. 7—12). But the reason for this powerlessness of the Law lay in the “flesh,” in our fleshly nature, by virtue of which we possessed the desire but not the performance of the good (vii. 13—25). If, then, that which was impossible to the Law was to be made possible, the power of sin in the flesh must be broken, the flesh itself therefore must be slain; and after the old fleshly Ego of man had been slain, a new Ego, the Spirit of God, must be implanted within him.—*God sending his own Son . . . . condemned sin in the flesh*: The very thing which it was impossible for the Law to perform was the divine purpose of the sending of the Son, viz. the “condemnation of sin in the flesh” which took place in the death of Christ upon the cross. The task set before the Son was this very death upon the cross for the destruction of sin.—*In the likeness of sinful flesh*: The form in which the Son must come was determined by the purpose for



which he was sent. He could not, in the first instance, come in the radiant celestial form which corresponds to his spiritual nature. If he was to bring about the death of sin in the flesh, he must take upon himself the form of sinful flesh; he must come, to use the apostle's own words, "in the likeness of sinful flesh." It was necessary for him to become what we were, in order that we might become what he is. He must take upon himself, not merely a flesh similar to our flesh, but this sinful flesh itself, and thereby be made altogether like us in order that he might now be able really to slay sin in the flesh. By this assumption of sinful flesh, Christ himself, although he knew not sin, was made sin for us (2 Cor. v. 21). That in spite of his assumption of sinful flesh he did not fall captive to sin, as we have done, the apostle explains simply by the fact that the essence of his nature was "spirit," and therefore the Spirit in him destroyed every independent movement of the fleshly body. But from this it appears that the slaying of sin in the flesh is not to be understood to refer to the sinless life of Christ, but simply to his death upon the cross.—*And for sin*: not as an offering for sin, but on account of sin. Sin was the sole cause of the sending of the Son, and the purpose of the sending was simply the slaying of sin upon the cross. It should be noticed that we have here a different doctrine of the redemption from that which we have had before (iii. 25), where Paul, following the traditional explanation, took the death of Christ as a sacrifice of reconciliation offered to God for the remission of our sins.—*Condemned sin in the flesh*: i.e. he condemned it to death by the slaying of the flesh on the cross of Christ. If sin as a power over man was to be destroyed, the flesh from which it derived its power must be slain. This took place through the death of the flesh of Christ upon the cross. This death is at the same time the divine sentence of death executed upon sin itself. But in baptism unto the death of Christ, this death has been transferred to us (vi. 1 sqq.), and therefore sentence of death has been executed against our flesh also, and so against the sin that dwells in our flesh.

4. But the divine purpose of the sentence of death executed upon sin through the slaying of the flesh was to break the power of sin in us also, in order that we might no longer follow the

lusts of our flesh, but the impulses of the divine Spirit, and so might really fulfil the moral demands of the Law. The Ego of man, therefore, is either determined by the "flesh," i.e. by his own fleshly nature and the sin that dwells in it (which was the natural state "under the Law," which the Law was too weak to abolish), or else it is determined by the Spirit of God, as an essence supernaturally implanted in it, and then it can fulfil the moral requirements of the Law. In order that the latter might be possible, it was necessary in the first place that the flesh, and in it sin, should be slain. This, however, having taken place through baptism unto the Crucified, the "law of the Spirit which giveth life in Christ Jesus" can reign in us, by virtue, that is to say, of the spirit of the risen Christ imparted to those who are baptized. This, then, is the purpose of the death of Christ upon the cross.—*The righteousness of the Law* (properly, the "maxim of right" or "ordinance of right" of the Law) *might be fulfilled in us* (viz. through the sway of the spirit in us) *who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit*: Here the possibility of the fulfilment of the moral requirements which were unfulfilled "under the Law" is declared.

5. The requirements of the Law can only be fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.—*They that are after the flesh* (i.e. belong to the flesh, are determined by the flesh) *do mind the things of the flesh* (their thoughts and efforts are devoted to that which belongs to the flesh), and *they that are after the Spirit*, the opposite to this. Flesh and Spirit here are both represented as if personal. [The word rendered *mind* here is the same that is rendered "savourest" in Matt. xvi. 23. Here, in vv. 6, 7, a word from the same root in Greek is used in the phrases which are rendered *carnally minded*, *spiritually minded*, *the carnal mind*; lit. the "mind (or better, "disposition" or "character") of the flesh," or "of the Spirit."]

6. Read, "For the disposition of the flesh is death, but the disposition of the Spirit is life and peace." That to which the thought of those who are fleshly (ver. 5) tends is death. Flesh by its very nature being subject to death, all its efforts have no other end.—"But the disposition of the Spirit is life:" As the Spirit of God in its essence is life, so the subject of all its efforts is life.—*And peace*: i.e. in communion with God (comp. v. 1).



## viii. 7, 8.

Here we have a further explanation of the first member of the comparison, viz. "the disposition of the flesh." It leads to death because it is *enmity against God*, for there is enmity against God everywhere where one is *not subject to the law of God* (comp. v. 10).—*Neither indeed can be*: because it is, on the contrary, subject to sin (vii. 14 sqq.).—*So then*, should be "and."—*They that are in the flesh* (whose life is only a life in the flesh, and is, therefore, after the mind of the flesh) *cannot please God*: because they share in this disobedience of the flesh to God. Consequently death is their portion also.

## viii. 9—11.

The second member of the comparison: If life in the flesh leads to this disobedience to God, and so to death, life in the Spirit leads to righteousness and to the resurrection. This thought is at once applied (in accordance with ver. 4) to the believers.

9. *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit*: In the baptized the flesh has been slain and the Spirit of God has entered as a "new man."—*If so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*: if the Spirit of God has really fixed its abode in you. The indwelling of the Spirit of God is regarded quite literally, as was previously the indwelling of sin (vii. 17). Here, as there, man is regarded as the instrument of another Ego dwelling and acting in him. Those, therefore, in whom the Spirit of God really dwells are also "in the Spirit." Their life is a life in the Spirit, which alone, therefore, determines all their conduct and fulfils the law of God in them. There really is therefore nothing worthy of condemnation in them.—*Now*, should be "but."—*If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*: If there are people, however, who do not possess the Spirit of Christ, then they are not really in communion with him at all, and hence their conduct does not affect the statement that the law of God is fulfilled in those who "are in Christ." The *Spirit of Christ* is the same Spirit that was previously called the "Spirit of God." As this Spirit constitutes the very nature of Christ (see note on i. 4), it is imparted through Christ to those who by baptism enter into communion with him. The expression, *have the Spirit*, substitutes for the idea that the Spirit, as the efficient Ego, dwells in man its instrument, the other idea that man himself is the acting Ego, and the Spirit is the divine power bestowed upon him.

10. The immediate effect of the spirit of Christ in us is that, although our body is dead because of sin, our spirit is alive because of the righteousness transmitted from Christ to us.—*Christ in you*: This expression is interchanged with the other expression “in Christ,” just as we have “the Spirit dwells in us” and the believers “are in the Spirit.” Christ being in the believers is exactly the same thing as what has just been called the possession of the spirit of Christ, except that here again the apostle has in his mind an actual indwelling of the spirit of Christ.—“The body indeed is dead on account of sin:” The idea here is not that it is the spirit of Christ dwelling in us that slays “the body,” i.e. the independent impulses of the fleshly body (see vi. 6). This body *is* already “dead,” through baptism unto the death of Christ, and *because of sin*; the sin that dwells in the body being the cause why it was necessary that the body should be “slain” by baptism.—*But the Spirit is life because of righteousness*: The spirit in opposition to the body is here the human “spirit,” or that which was before called the “inward man” (vii. 22). This under the dominion of sin is lifeless, i.e. powerless and ineffective; but by the implanting of the spirit of Christ it has become “life,” i.e. full of living activity, and this already in the present.—*Because of righteousness*: This, then, is the cause why our inward man is life, inasmuch as in the justified the spirit of Christ actually bears sway. This present life for righteousness is the living, effective fulfilment of the law of God, now first made possible, in which the inward man, indeed, always delighted even when he was under the dominion of sin.

11. As previously disobedience to God was directly connected with death, so now the new life in fulfilment of the divine commands is connected with the future life of the resurrection. The Spirit dwelling in us is not merely a power of the new moral life, but at the same time the pledge of the future revivification of our mortal bodies. Hence the indwelling Spirit of God is now spoken of as “the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead.” Because the Spirit that dwells in us is the Spirit of the God who raised up Jesus from the dead, therefore the God who did this will, for the sake of this Spirit dwelling in us, one day also raise up again our bodies which are by nature liable to death.—*By his Spirit that dwelleth in you*: This would mean that this



Spirit itself, as the germ of indestructible life already implanted within us, would at some future time be the means of bringing about the bodily resurrection also. There is another reading, "for the sake of His Spirit that dwelleth in you."—*Shall also quicken your mortal bodies*: We must not understand this of a resurrection of the "flesh," i.e. of the earthly material of our bodies, which, on the contrary, is necessarily subject to corruption, but of the reconstruction of our bodies from celestial light. At the resurrection we receive, according to Paul, a "spiritual body" in place of the "natural" body. See 1 Cor. xv. 35—50.

viii. 12, 13.

The final result of the discussion up to this point: If the Spirit of God dwells in us and is a pledge to us of our future resurrection, then we, who have entered into communion with Christ, are not by our freedom from the Law involved in any necessity to live after the flesh or to serve its sinful lust, but are enabled to slay the impulses of this fleshly body; for only thus shall we win life instead of death. The objection of the opponents (vi. 1, 15) has thus been refuted at every point. The personal address to his readers is intended by the apostle to attract their special attention to the result that has now been attained.

12. *We are debtors* (i.e. are bound) *not to the flesh*: The contrary, "but to the Spirit," is understood from what has preceded.

13. If we live after the flesh we are subject to death, and hence are not in possession of the spirit of Christ. But if through the Spirit we mortify (i.e. "slay") the deeds of the flesh, we shall become partakers of that life in the kingdom of God of which this Spirit is our pledge. This verse is not an exhortation, any more than ver. 12, but adduces one more proof that those who through the spirit of Christ have become participators in the hope of the resurrection are straightway free from the dominion of the flesh.—*The deeds of the body*: the natural expressions of life on the part of this mortal, sin-ruled, fleshly body.

viii. 14—30.

Further establishment of the hope of the resurrection through our sonship to God, of which the Spirit of God bears witness to us.

14. *For as many as are led* (or "impelled") *by the Spirit of God*:

This being impelled, i.e. inwardly determined and ruled, by the Spirit of God is manifested by the slaying of the "deeds of the body" by the Spirit.—"They are sons of God:" and shall therefore live. They are "sons" of God inasmuch as the spirit of the Son of God dwells in them and rules their action.

## viii. 15, 16.

That you are really sons of God is testified also by the Spirit which has been imparted to you. For this is not such a spirit as animates slaves, so that you should only experience fear afresh like that inspired by the threatening and condemning Law; but the Spirit that ye have received is the Spirit that impels the sons of God, and animated by which we call God our Father.

15. "A spirit of bondage:" This means, not so much the servile disposition itself, as a spiritual power determining man which produces such a disposition in him. So, again, the "spirit of sonship" [A.V. *adoption*] does not mean a childlike or filial spirit, but the Spirit which directs those who have been placed in the relation of sons to God, and which produces a filial disposition in them.—*Again*: i.e. as formerly under the Law. This is addressed to those who have formerly been Jews.—*Whereby* (lit. "in which," i.e. filled and impelled by which) *we cry, Abba, Father*: Abba is the Syriac (Aramaic) word for Father, and appears to have been preserved even in the Greek-speaking communities as the name by which God was addressed in prayer. It is here indicated that this form of address was inspired by the Spirit of God, and it was probably especially common in what was known as "speaking with tongues." Compare with this passage Gal. iv. 6, which is to some extent verbally the same.

16. *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit*: The divine Spirit itself testifies to our (human) spirit (i.e. to our self-consciousness), our sonship to God, viz. by coming upon us and taking effect in such inspired cries (compare the "praying with the Spirit," of 1 Cor. xiv. 15).

17. The proof of that hope of the future life which is founded upon the "being impelled by the Spirit" is made complete.—*And* (or better, "But") *if children, then heirs*: A proposition of universal validity is here applied to the children of God. By the inheritance we must of course understand the promised share in the



Messianic kingdom.—*Heirs of God*: heirs of the possessions which the Heavenly Father has promised to His children (see note on iv. 13 sq.).—*Joint heirs with Christ*: As the heavenly Son of God, Christ is the heir to the Messianic kingdom. The believers, however, inasmuch as they are in communion with the Son of God, share not only in the sonship to the Father, but also in the dominion which appertains to the Son.—*If so be that we suffer with him*: The sufferings of believers for their faith are a participation in the suffering of Christ, not as though it were necessary that they should to a certain extent supplement it, but inasmuch as their communion with the Crucified is proved by the imitation of his suffering (comp. 2 Cor. i. 5, 7).—*That we may be also glorified together*: That we may share in the celestial brilliancy in which the glorified Christ shines. This expresses the confidence which believers should have in the midst of their sufferings with Christ.

18. For all suffering that can befall us in this present time is not to be considered in comparison with the glory that awaits us in the Messianic kingdom.—*This present time*: is the time before the advent of the Messianic kingdom. In the Jewish and primitive Christian view, the present and future life were not distinguished from one another as two distinct worlds in space ("this world" and "the other world"), nor as "time" and "eternity," but as "present" and "future." The locality of the future Messianic kingdom is not heaven, but the earth transfigured and glorified, to which Christ on his return will descend from heaven.—*Which shall be revealed in us*: the revelation of this "glory" shall be fulfilled in the persons of the believers themselves, inasmuch as they, as sons of God, are actually put in possession of the promised inheritance.

#### viii. 19—27.

To this hope of the future glory of the sons of God, testimony is borne by the yearning of the "creature," and again by the yearning of the believers themselves, to whom has been given the Spirit of God as a gift of first fruits, and finally by the Spirit of God itself, by the expressions of the yearning expectation and spiritual ecstasy with which it has inspired us. The concluding proof of all is given in vv. 28—30.

## viii. 19—22.

First testimony to our future glorification: the longing of the "creature." By *creature* we are certainly not to understand non-Christian humanity, but the whole creation, or the whole of nature by which man is surrounded. It awaits the *manifestation of the sons of God* with yearning, because the *glory*, i.e. the imperishable celestial brilliancy in which the sons of God will shine in the kingdom of God, will also bring on the emancipation of the natural world itself from the lot of corruption, and the transfiguration and glorification of heaven and earth and all that is therein.

19. *The earnest* (or "yearning") *expectation of the creature*: That a yearning desire should be ascribed to irrational creation has perplexed many commentators. But we must look upon this expression of the yearning of the "creature," in the same way as such expressions as that the birds sing praises to their Creator, or that the heavens declare His glory. The apostle traces everywhere throughout nature, which is subject to corruption, signs of depression and sadness. The sounds of nature which reach his ear he profoundly interprets as the expression of a yearning desire for emancipation from the limits of the finite.—*The manifestation of the sons of God*: What is meant is, the time when those who have been called to be sons of God shall be put into actual possession of the inheritance promised to them, and when, therefore, the physical transfiguration which awaits them will ensue.

20, 21. Read, "Since the creature was made subject to decay, not of its own will, but because of him who hath subjected it in hope that the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty which the glory of the sons of God brings." [Lit. "To the liberty of the glory of the children of God."]

20. The reason for the yearning is found in the corruption or decay to which all natural existence is subject. The mortality of man has been incurred by himself. External creation, on the other hand, has been subjected to the same lot of corruption, "not of its own will," i.e. without having incurred it by any guilt of its own.—"Because of him who hath subjected it:" may probably be most simply referred to man, whose guilt has not only been



the cause of his own death, but has also involved all nature in corruption and decay. From 1 Cor. xv. 46, we should of course obtain a different view.—*In hope*: at the same time with the lot of corruption, to which creation is subject, hope of a transfiguration to come is implanted in it. The cause of this hope of course is God.

21. "In hope that the creature itself also shall be delivered." The creature itself also, no less than men who have been called to sonship with God.—*From the bondage of corruption*: from servile subjection to destruction or corruption. "Corruption" is the opposite to "glorification." Here it is represented, like death, as a ruling power.—"To the liberty which the glory of the sons of God brings." A *glorious liberty* peculiar to the children of God is entirely out of the question. The "glory" of the sons of God is the transfiguration or glorification which awaits them, which by its very nature is free from all decay. And this glorification of the sons of God, when it is revealed, is to bring to the "creature" also freedom from corruption.

22. *For we know*: The yearning of the creature (ver. 19) is here spoken of as an idea quite familiar to the apostle's readers. The Jews themselves expected, indeed, a new heaven and a new earth.—"Groaneth . . . together with us:" utters, as we do, sounds expressive of its yearning.—"And travaileth in pain together with us:" The pain which creation feels at its present corruption is poetically described as the birth-pangs of its future transfiguration.

#### viii. 23.

Second testimony in justification of the hope of the future glory of the sons of God; viz. our own yearning hope, as it has been imparted by means of the first fruits of the Spirit, which have been bestowed upon us, and established in the very nature of the divine order which gives salvation only to those who hope for it.—*Which have the first fruits of the Spirit* (i.e. the "first-fruit gift of the Spirit"): The Spirit of God itself is called the first-fruit gift, inasmuch as the bestowal of this is a pledge to us of the further gift of the future transfiguration of our body. The words are intended therefore to show that we have just ground for our expectation.—*Groan within ourselves*: the same word as in ver. 22. Not only the longing of the creature,

but also our own yearning desire, is a pledge to us that that which is hoped for will one day appear.—“Waiting for the adoption, for the deliverance of our body:” The real installation in sonship, and so in possession of the inheritance promised to the sons of God, will not take place until our bodies shall be delivered, i.e. when the body shall be set free from the bondage of corruption and endowed with the glory of celestial brilliancy to which nothing earthly any longer attaches (comp. 1 Cor. xv. 44).

## viii. 24, 25.

Justification of this yearning expectation of the adoption to sonship. We have been saved by hope; but hope, in which that which is hoped for is already seen, is not hope, for that which a man sees he has no longer any need to hope for. But if we hope for that which we do not see, then we wait in patience until that which is hoped for shall come. Hence it is upon hope that all the believer’s certainty of salvation rests. Our yearning expectation, then, is far from being the expression of anxiety, or of restless doubt whether that which is hoped for will appear or not. It is rather a patient waiting, sure of its cause, and itself a pledge of the future appearance of that which is hoped for.

24. “For we have been saved (not *are saved*) by hope:” Paul does not mean that the salvation which we already have consists *only* of hope, but that it is on the lines of a hope of something not yet perceived, hope of our future life and future transfiguration in communion with Christ, that we have been justified. Hence it follows that a patient waiting until that which is hoped for comes is a distinctive mark of believers.—*But hope that is seen is not hope*: He who insists upon seeing in order that he may believe, has not been saved by hope, and consequently this patient hoping is the very thing which, according to the divine order of salvation, is the pledge to us of future glory.—[*For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?* according to another reading, “For who hopeth for what he seeth?”]

25. *Then do we with patience wait for it*: It is of the very essence of Christian hope to wait with patience and quiet confidence until that which is hoped for comes.

## viii. 26, 27.

Third testimony in favour of this hope (see note on ver. 23);



the intercession of the Holy Spirit for us, which assists us in our prayers and finds words for the expression of our longing.

26. *Likewise the Spirit also*: As our own hope testifies to our future glorification, so also does the Spirit of God which is imparted to us, taking up our cause and putting into our mouths those inarticulate sounds of longing [*groanings which cannot be uttered*] which express better than we ourselves could do our waiting for the "redemption of our bodies."—*The Spirit* is the divine Spirit which, although it speaks from man, is still distinguished from him as a separate Ego. These sounds of longing are supernaturally inspired by the Spirit of God.—"Helpeth our weakness:" helpfully cares for our incapability, putting into our mouths inspired and hopeful words of prayer.—*For we know not what we should pray for as we ought*: This is the reason why the Spirit cares for our weakness. Words fail us to express that which stirs our hearts, and to pray as becomes those who pray rightly and joyfully.—*Maketh intercession for us*, "represents us:" i.e. prays in our place, putting the sounds of prayer in our mouths.—*With groanings which cannot be uttered*: i.e. inarticulate expressions of our longing. What is meant is the sounds of the so-called "speaking with tongues" (1 Cor. xiv.), that cannot be expressed in words. This speaking with tongues is a speaking "with the Spirit," but not "with the understanding" (1 Cor. xiv. 12 sqq.), i.e. it is not a connected expression of reasonable consciousness, but a speech of overflowing enthusiasm, in which intelligent consideration is lost sight of, and which for this reason is referred, not to ourselves, but to "the Spirit," of which our lips are only the instruments. This speech in sounds which cannot be put into distinct words is prayer, but it is prayer "of the Spirit" in us. The substance of this prayer is, on the one hand, the expression of joy and blessedness in the possession of the salvation already received, and, on the other hand, the expression of confident hope and yearning desire of future glory. The latter is dealt with here. The very fact, therefore, that it is the Spirit itself which produces these mysterious sounds is proof of the trustworthiness of our hope.

27. *And He that searcheth the hearts*: the Omniscient. The Holy Spirit has taken up its abode in our heart.—*Knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit*: Knoweth what the Spirit means

to express by those sounds. To men, without interpretation, which again is itself a gift of the Spirit, they remain unintelligible (comp. 1 Cor. xii. 10, xiv. 5—13, 28).—*Because* should be “that.”—*He maketh intercession for* (“he represents”) *the saints*: This is the “mind” of the Spirit that is known to God.—*The saints*: those who are dedicated to God.—*According to the will of God*: strictly, “according to God.” The Spirit prays as, according to the divine ordinance, it is fitting to pray.

## viii. 28—30.

In addition to the testimonies to the certainty of our hope which have now been adduced, there comes the last and strongest proof, the eternal election to salvation, which has already taken effect in our calling and justification, and which may therefore be relied upon to be completed in our future glorification.

28. *All things work together for good, &c.*, should be “To them that love God, all works together for good, to them who have been called according to His purpose.”—“To them that love God:” to them that stand to God in the relation of children.—“All works together for good,” or, according to another reading, “God works all together for good.” In either case, what is meant is not “all things,” i.e. everything that happens to men generally, but all the manifestations of God’s grace, which are further detailed immediately afterwards in vv. 29, 30. These are the means, in the hands of God, of realizing to us “the good,” i.e. eternal salvation. The universally known religious truth, that to those who love God everything that God does serves for good, is here applied to that which God does for the preparation of the eternal glory destined for us.—“To them that have been called according to His purpose:” a more exact definition of “those that love God,” those who have been called in accordance with the divine counsel.

29. This verse explains how all works together for good to those who have been called according to God’s counsel.—*Whom He did foreknow*: viz. as those whom He would call and bless. The divine predestination was not made dependent upon a foreseen faith on the part of man.—*He also did predestinate* (i.e. he further destined them beforehand) *to be conformed to the image of His Son* (i.e. to receive the same celestial brilliant form as the Son of God)



*that he might be the first-born among many brethren:* The Son of God was to have many brethren, who were to be sons of God, just as he is, partaking of the same spirit, the same inheritance, the same transfigured brilliancy as he (see ver. 17).

30. *Called:* not simply invited, but actually brought to the belief in the gospel. Paul always uses the word in this sense.—*Glorified:* assigned to them “glory” in the Messianic kingdom. In the sight of God the whole execution of his plan of salvation stands as already completed.

viii. 31—39. *Conclusion of the First Division of the First Part.*

If God, then, may be confidently relied upon one day to glorify with the risen Christ those who have been called in the communion of Christ to be sons and heirs, then the proposition laid down at the beginning of the chapter (viii. 1), that there is no longer anything to be condemned in them, has been proved from every point of view. No further objection, then, to the gospel of justification by faith is possible. As chosen of God and beloved by Christ, they are liable to no accusation, no condemnation, and nothing in the world can separate them from loving communion with God.

31. *What shall we then say to these things?* What further objection can be raised to all this? How can any one, in the face of these facts and truths, still maintain that the gospel of justification by faith leads to sin, and renders liable to the condemnation of the Law? There is nothing that can be said in reply to these things.—*If God be for us, who can be against us?* If God himself appear for us, with the preparations of His grace, who will be able to appear against us as accuser? No one.

32. The manifestation of His love which God has given to us by the death of His own Son upon the cross ordained for our salvation, is the surest pledge of our future reception into the Messianic kingdom.—*Delivered him up:* viz. to death, in order to deliver us from death.—*How shall He not with him also freely give us all things?* Compare the similar conclusion, v. 9 sqq. With him, the Risen and Glorified, God will give us all, viz. full participation in his inheritance and his glory.

33. *Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?* Who will bring an accusation against them as though they were still

sinner and still under the Law?—*It is God that justifieth*: Triumphant reply to the question that has been raised. Whom God justifies, i.e. absolves from every guilt, him no one can any longer accuse as a sinner.

34. *Who is he that condemneth?* i.e. to death, as the punishment of sin.—*It is Christ that died*: Answer to the second question: It is Christ indeed that died for us, in order to set us free from the condemnation of the Law, i.e. from death. How, then, can any one, after this, condemn us to death?—*Yea, rather that is risen again*: Not only has he by his death delivered us from sin and death, but also by his resurrection he has raised us to a new life in the Spirit of God.—*Who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us*: who, as exalted to the right hand of God, and so to a share in God's dominion, is always at hand with his help for us, and continually intercedes for us with the Father, and so brings about our participation in his inheritance and his glory with the Father. We should further notice the rhetorical succession of relative sentences, each of which contains a further intensification of the thought expressed.

35. What then, after such great manifestations of love, can separate us from this *love of Christ* (or, according to another reading, "love of God")? Who can make this love so ineffective that henceforth it can be manifested to us no more? In explanation of this question the apostle asks further: Can *tribulation or distress or persecution, &c.*? With a vivid remembrance of his own sufferings which he has had to bear for the proclamation of his gospel, there enters at the same time into his soul the joyful consciousness that even such sufferings cannot separate him from the love of God, and therefore cannot shake his faith in the helpful love of God, which is triumphantly proved in the very sufferings of those who are His.

36. *As it is written*: Ps. xlv. 22, quoted word for word from the Greek version.—This verse begins the answer: Such sufferings befall us for God's sake, as Scripture testifies, and they are therefore only a proof that we belong to Him.

37. The answer is made complete: In all these distresses *we are more than conquerors*, and that *through him* (i.e. in the power of Him) *who loved us*: i.e. in the power of God. Hence in these very sufferings which we bear for His sake, the sustaining power of His love is only proved again from another side.



## viii. 38, 39.

The train of thought is brought to a conclusion. Even sufferings cannot separate us from this love of God; for I am certain that nothing at all, nothing whatever in the whole world, can snatch us from the hands of this love. Neither death, nor life, nor any superhuman powers, whether they come upon us now or hereafter, whether they be in the height or in the depth, are able to do so.

38. *Nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers*, should be “nor angels nor dominions.” In 1 Cor. xv. 24, different kinds of superhuman powers are distinguished. The commonly received text adds here, “nor powers.” Most of the MSS. put this after “things to come.”—*Nor things present nor things to come*: neither powers that threaten us in the present, nor those that threaten us in the future (i.e. after the end of the present life).

39. *Nor height nor depth*: neither supernal nor infernal powers. Probably by these dominions and powers are meant evil spirits of various orders, which threaten our present life and our entrance into the future life alike, and which are at work partly above and partly below the earth, in the “kingdoms of the air” and in the lower world.—*Which is in Christ Jesus*: revealed in Christ and through him bestowed upon us.

ix.—xi. *Second Division of the First Part of the Epistle.*

Defence of the practical results of the Pauline mission to the Gentiles against the anxiety of the Jewish Christians, lest thereby the promises of God given to the people of Israel should have been made void. The apostle having up to this point developed his gospel of “justification by faith” on all sides, and shown both its religious and moral justification, he now proceeds to the practical question which arises in view of the numerous conversions of the Gentiles, and the very small number of Jews who had become believers. However the matter might stand with regard to the truth of this gospel and the equalization of the rights of Gentiles and Jews, the practical scruple always remains that, if it be true, God must have rejected His people, and so have become false to His promises. This scruple the apostle endeavours to dissipate in the second division of the first portion of his Epistle, in which therefore we must look for the key to the historical interpretation of the whole.

The apostle discharges his task in three sections. First (ix. 6—29) he rejects the Jewish conception of the promise given to the people of Israel, and so at the same time the objection made to this offensive fact, by those to whom it appeared to be at variance with God's truth and righteousness. In the next place (ix. 30—xi. 10) he endeavours to interpret the fact itself from the nature of the divine plan of salvation, which connects "righteousness" with faith. Finally (xi. 11—36) he seeks to reconcile the Jewish-Christian mind to this fact, by going back to the consideration of its ultimate purpose, and explains the contradiction between the promise to Israel and the temporary neglect of the people, in favour of the Gentiles, by pointing out the divine plan of salvation, in which the calling of the Gentiles in place of the Jews is only the means of showing that all alike are disobedient, in order that grace may finally have mercy upon all.

ix. 1—5. *Introduction to the Second Division of the First Part.*

In sharp contrast with the enthusiastic description of the inseparable loving communion with God, through Christ, in which those stand who have been justified by faith, the apostle now begins afresh in words of deep sorrow and painful sympathy with his fellow-countrymen, who are excluded from this blessedness, the members of God's own ancient people of the covenant.

1. Note how the apostle emphasizes the sincerity of his assurance. Everything depends upon his convincing his fellow-countrymen that his gospel has not proceeded from indifference, and still less from hostility to his own people.—*I say the truth in Christ*: as one who stands in communion with Christ.—*"In the Holy Spirit"*: The testimony of my conscience proceeds from the Holy Spirit which fills me.

2. "That I have great sorrow, and unceasing pain in my heart."

3. So sincere is the apostle's sympathy, that he himself would rather be visited with eternal perdition than endowed with life in communion with Christ, if he could thereby win his countrymen for Christ.—*Accursed*: properly a thing that is under a curse, devoted to the wrath of God and so to destruction.—*From Christ*: away from Christ, separated from communion with him.—*My kinsmen*: here properly "those of the same race," my fellow-countrymen.



4. Enumeration of all the privileges that have fallen to the lot of his countrymen, in order to confirm the sincerity of the wish he has expressed.—*The adoption*: i.e. the adoption to sonship. Israel is called in the Scriptures “the son of God,” Hosea xi. 1, &c.—*The glory*: the divine brilliancy that overhung the ark of the covenant.—*The covenants*: i.e. the covenant with Abraham.—*The giving of the law*: on Sinai.—*The service*: in the temple. *The promises*: which were repeatedly given to the fathers, and to the people itself by the prophets.

5. Read, “Whose are the fathers, and from whom the Christ cometh according to the flesh. He who is over all, God, be blessed for ever.”—“From whom the Christ cometh according to the flesh:” i.e. the nation from which the Messiah in his earthly human appearance, as Jesus Christ, derives his descent (see i. 3).—“He who is over all, God, be blessed for ever:” This should be preceded by a full stop. The ascription of praise (“doxology”) refers not to Christ but to God, and stands here most suitably, after the enumeration of all the divine benefits conferred upon Israel. We must decide against the reference of this doxology to Christ, or rather to *the* Christ (the Messiah), partly on the ground of the order of the words, partly on account of the sharp contrast between it and the expression “after the flesh” (instead of “after the Spirit”), partly on the ground that this is a most unsuitable place for the introduction of praise to the Messiah, and finally on the ground of the apostle’s doctrine, as known to us elsewhere, in which he never speaks of the Messiah as God, or even makes him the equal of God. No argument on the other side can be based on 2 Tim. iv. 18, as that Epistle is not genuine.

ix. 6—29. *First Section of the Second Division.*

Refutation of the Jewish conception of the divine promise, by an exposition of the true way in which it is actually realized.

ix. 6—13.

Proof that God’s promise generally is by no means given to those who naturally belong to Israel as such, but simply to those who have been chosen according to God’s free will.

6. *Not as though, &c.*: i.e. “It is not as though the word of God were therefore invalid” (lit. “had fallen off,” or “fallen into decay”). The transition of the gospel to the Gentiles is not to be

understood as if *the word of God*, viz. the word of promise, had therefore become invalid.—*For they are not all Israel*, i.e. they are not all the people of the covenant intended by God in His promise (comp. Gal. vi. 16, “the Israel of God”), *which are of Israel*, i.e. who are descended from Israel.

7. Nor are all Abraham’s descendants his *children*, but, as is said in Gen. xxi. 12, *In Isaac shall thy seed be called*. The fact that not all the physical descendants of Abraham are heirs of the promise, but only those of Isaac, not the Ishmaelites and Ketureans, needs not to be proved to the Jewish Christians, any more than the fact, afterwards brought forward (vv. 10—15), that only the descendants of Jacob, and not those of Esau, belong to the chosen people of God. The words of the Old Testament originally mean, that Abraham shall obtain through Isaac a numerous posterity. Paul applies them to mean that there shall be a selection even from among the natural descendants of Abraham.

8. Explanation of the passage of Scripture. Not all the natural descendants of Abraham are therefore *children of God*, i.e. heirs of the sonship to God promised to Abraham and his seed; but only the *children of the promise*, those who have been born in accordance with the promise given to Abraham (Gen. xxi. 12), and to whom alone therefore the promise of the divine sonship applies, will be *counted* (by God) *for seed*, i.e. are in the sight of God really the chosen “seed of Abraham.” The Jewish Christian would of necessity conclude indeed from this very argument that the whole posterity of Abraham born after the promise belonged to the “children of the promise.” According to Paul, however, the promised descendants of Abraham means only those to whom in God’s counsel the promise of the Messianic inheritance personally refers.

9. The interpretation just given is supported by a second quotation from Scripture compiled with some freedom from Gen. xviii. 10, 14. The birth of the son of Sarah (Isaac) took place in accordance with a special promise, consequently among all the sons of Abraham the promise of the sonship to God refers to him alone.

#### ix. 10—13.

Similarly again a choice was made between the sons of Isaac and Rebecca, and even before their birth, so that the decision



who should be heirs of the promise might depend simply upon God's free counsel of grace and not on human merit. This therefore is also the law according to which the will of God for the salvation of man manifests itself.

10. *And not only this*: Not only is the son of Sarah alone among the sons of Abraham a "child of the promise."—"But Rebecca also, although she had conceived by *one*:" The sentence is incomplete. The thought to be supplied, "received the word of promise that of the twin sons only the one, Jacob, was called," follows in ver. 12 in a different form. The sons of Abraham were of different mothers, but Jacob and Esau are sons of the same mother and the same father, and yet the choice, which is of grace, falls only upon the one of them.

11. *For the children being not yet born*: If the choice took place before the birth, it is plain that the ground of it is not to be found in personal worthiness or unworthiness.—*That the purpose of God according to election might stand*: The special circumstances under which the election of Jacob took place, were intended to establish the inviolability of the counsel of God, that simply those who have been chosen according to His good pleasure are "children of the promise."—The marks of parenthesis to this verse should be omitted. The one sentence runs on into ver. 12: *For . . . that the purpose of God might stand . . . it was said unto her, &c.*

12. *It was said unto her*: Gen. xxv. 23. What is there said of the two nations of Israel and Edom is referred by Paul to the two ancestors themselves, so that he regards the relation of the elder brother to the younger as that of a servant to his master. Thus God's counsel inverts the natural relation.

13. *As it is written*: Mal. i. 2 sq. Here again the passage refers to the two nations, and the interpretation to the persons.—*Hated*: To the Israelites their own hatred of the Edomites appeared to be the hatred which the God of the covenant felt towards them. Paul turns this saying to account to express the rejection of Esau exclusively upon the ground of God's uncontrolled good pleasure.

ix. 14—21.

Justification of this divine counsel whereby a selection is determined, from the idea of the almighty will with which man may not venture to quarrel.

14. *What shall we say then?* What objection can we raise against this? If the election to sonship depends purely upon the free counsel of God, and in no way upon the worthiness or unworthiness of men, then it seems that the Jewish Christian may reasonably bring as an objection to the truth of such an assertion, the unavoidable conclusion that then God would be acting unjustly. This conclusion Paul rejects with the indignant cry of "Far be it" [see note on iii. 4], without at first, however, practically invalidating it.

15. In reply the apostle is satisfied in the first instance with confirming the truth of what he has affirmed by another scriptural saying, in order thereby to silence the objection directed against him.—For the same conclusion which is drawn from Paul's doctrine might just as well be drawn from the clear and unambiguous words of Scripture. This, however, the Jewish Christian will surely not interfere with.—*For He saith to Moses:* The quotation that follows is to justify the "Far be it" of the last verse. The passage is from Exodus xxxiii. 19, and in the original is intended to appease Moses, when God has refused his petition, by the assurance that God will show him all possible favour and grace. Paul takes it, on the other hand, of a choice that has been made among men just according to God's free will.

16. The conclusion drawn from the word of Scripture is here given. The choice is not the affair of him that willet, &c. Man can do nothing for it, and so has no right to interfere with God about it. Of course an unrestrained arbitrary choice on the part of God, in the election of those who are to be favoured, by no means really follows from the truth, that the bestowal of salvation is not conditional upon any excellence whatever on the part of man, but is simply the work of the divine grace. Paul himself did not actually rest in this issue (see xi. 11 sqq.).

17. The proposition set forth in ver. 16 is supported by an example of the converse. As God is gracious to some, so He hardens others according to the same free omnipotence.—*For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh:* Ex. ix. 16, quoted freely from the Greek version. There it is said that God preserved Pharaoh alive in order to show His power in him, but Paul understands it to mean that God had *raised up* Pharaoh for this very purpose, i.e. called him into existence in order that He might show His



power in him, viz. His power which hardens, and so excludes from salvation.—*My name*: i.e. my dominion.

18. Consequently the truth stands, that mercy and hardening alike depend simply upon the divine almighty will.—*Hardeneth*: makes him unable to receive salvation. This insusceptibility therefore is itself the work of God.

19. If then the “hardening” of him who is not chosen is also God’s will and work, the objection comes in again, that God has then no right to hold man responsible for the evil, inasmuch as it is the irresistible will of God himself that has made him evil. This very natural reply the apostle dismisses in the first instance with a simple appeal to the unrestricted right of the Creator to make what He will of His creatures.—*Thou wilt then say unto me*: Thou wilt of course raise the objection. The objection itself and the ground of it which follows, in the form of a second question, are intended again to represent the opinion of the Jewish Christian.—*Why doth He yet find fault?* by what right does he hold those who are hardened responsible as for their own fault? —*Who hath resisted*, should be “who can resist” [strictly, “who resisteth”].

20. A corresponding question by which the objection raised is exposed as entirely unallowable.—*Nay but, O man, who art thou?* Nay, so mayest thou not question, but rather I question thy right to call God to account.—*O man*: used contemptuously.—*That repliest against God*: how can man dispute with God?—*Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it?* Can, for example, an image speak thus to the sculptor? even so little right hast thou to speak thus to God.

21. Read, “Or (if this is not sufficient) hath not the potter power?” &c.: You may no more dispute God’s absolute power, from the same general body among men, to make some the objects of His grace and others the objects of His wrath, according to His own free choice, than you can dispute this power of the potter.

#### ix. 22—29.

Application of what has been said to the choice which has been made from among the Jews and the contemporaneous calling of Gentiles.

22, 23, 24. Read, “But if God, although He desired to show

His wrath and to make known His power, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, that He might make known the wealth of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He hath prepared for glory, as which He hath called us also not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles.”—If therefore God, notwithstanding that He had, in the exercise of the free will of His power, destined some to be “vessels of wrath,” still thought good to exercise long-suffering for a time, in order that He might manifest His glory in the vessels of mercy, what objection can be made to this determination? Have we, in consequence of this temporary exercise of long-suffering, a right to reproach God if He also finally carries out His original counsel against the vessels of wrath? This conclusion of the sentence (after “*If God*,” &c.) is omitted, being self-evident from what has been said in vv. 20 sq. It is quite a mistake to suppose that Paul is coming round here, and means to say that God has not really acted as He had the power to act. He sees, rather, in the benefits hitherto shown to the Jewish nation, and therefore even to the rejected in that nation, a long-suffering exercised by God toward the “vessels of wrath,” and regards them as a means in the hands of God for the execution of His counsel upon the vessels of mercy. That God has rejected some and favoured the others is set forth as a fact which, after what has previously been said, needs no further justification. On the other hand, the opinion that the long-suffering hitherto shown gives the Jews any claim to escape the divine wrath is rejected.—*To show His wrath*: i.e. against the multitude of the Jews.—*Vessels of wrath . . . vessels of mercy*: subjects of the manifestation of God’s wrath on the one hand, or of His mercy on the other hand. The expression is taken from the illustration of ver. 21.—*Endured*: i.e. until the time of the sending of Christ (see iii. 25).—“The wealth of His glory:” see notes on v. 2, viii. 17 sqq.

## ix. 24.

Under the form of a closer definition of the “vessels of mercy,” the apostle now proceeds to place before his readers the second indisputable fact, that the election has been made not from among the Jews alone, but also from among the Gentiles.



## ix. 25, 26.

The establishment of the fact just stated by passages of Scripture.

25. "In Hosea," or, according to another reading, "to Hosea." The passage is Hos. ii. 23. There it is the ten tribes that are meant, which God, although He no longer regarded them as His people, would again receive into His favour. Paul takes those who were not God's people to be the Gentiles.—Read, "I will call that which was not my people, my people, and her that was not my beloved, my beloved."—*I will call*: a play upon words with reference to "called" in a different sense in ver. 24.—"That which was not my people:" lit. "the not-my-people." God will call them "my people," i.e. will call them to be members of the Messianic community and of the true "Israel of God."

26. *And it shall come to pass, &c.*: a second prophetic utterance from Hos. i. 10.—*In the place*: This refers originally to the land of Israel. Paul takes the meaning of the prophecy to be, that in the people of God, from which the Gentiles had hitherto been excluded, they now find their place as "sons of God."—*The children*, should be "sons."

## ix. 27—29.

Passages in support of the other fact, that from Israel only a chosen number has been called.

27. *Esaias also crieth concerning Israel*: Is. x. 22 sq., quoted with some freedom from the Greek version. In the prophet the words are a comforting assurance that, in spite of the great judgment of God, still a remnant of the people shall return from exile. Paul takes them to mean that the bulk of the people has been rejected, and *only* a remnant has been chosen.—*The children*, should be "the sons."

28. Read, "For, completing and cutting short his word, the Lord will fulfil it upon the earth."—In this verse (Is. x. 23) there is an essential difference between the original Hebrew and the Greek version. Paul adheres to the latter, and understands it to mean that God realizes His promise, "limiting" or "shortening" it, i.e. that He restricts the extent of His promise to a small number.

29. *And as Esaias said before*, should be "And as Isaiah hath said beforehand:" Is. i. 9, word for word from the Greek version.

ix. 30—xi. 10. *Second Section of the Second Division of the First Part.*

The fact that the Jews have been excluded and the Gentiles called, is due to the failure on the part of the former, in spite of all their endeavours after righteousness, to recognize the nature of the divine plan of salvation, which makes righteousness dependent upon faith and not upon works. Hence the calling of a multitude of believing Gentiles, along with a small number only from Israel, must be regarded as practically a fulfilment of the promise. The exclusion, however, of the remainder, whom God has hardened in their unbelief, only brings the law of this plan of salvation clearly before us from the other side.

## ix. 30—x. 4.

The fact that the Gentiles, who did not follow after righteousness, attained it, but the Jews in spite of their pursuit of righteousness did not attain it, is explained by the nature of the divine plan of salvation which is revealed in Christ, according to which righteousness is to be won by faith and not by works. The Jews, not from want of zeal for God, but from want of true perception, have attempted to set up their own righteousness in place of the righteousness of God, and so have failed to perceive that with Christ has come the end of the Law, and in its place righteousness from faith.

30. *What shall we say then?* What objection can be made to this representation, which is founded upon Scripture itself? None; "for the Gentiles," &c. (not, *That the Gentiles*, &c.). The facts of experience cut short every objection.

31. Read, "But Israel, following after the law of righteousness, did not attain to the Law." We should have expected, in order to form the proper antithesis to the last verse, "following after the righteousness of the Law;" but the meaning is, that Israel pursued the Law, but did not *reach* it (strictly, did not "arrive" at it, i.e. at the fulfilment of it). This Law, however, is here called the "law of righteousness," inasmuch as it prescribes the righteousness which Israel sought to realize.

32. Read, "Wherefore? Because (they sought to attain righteousness) not from faith, but as from works of the Law" [or according to the oldest MSS. "as from works"]. The answer



which the apostle gives to the question as to the reason for this fact, points in the first place to the unbelief of Israel. In doing this, however, he certainly does not mean to withdraw what he has just said, that the final cause is to be found, not in the will or the course of man, but in the divine counsel (ver. 16). Indeed, he explains immediately afterwards (x. 2) that what is wanting on the part of Israel is not so much religious zeal as perception, and further below he shows that by the counsel of God it was *intended* that the great bulk of the people should be hardened in unbelief, in order that the law of the divine plan of salvation, that righteousness should be given not from works but from faith, might be revealed (xi. 5—8). It is therefore a misunderstanding of this section to suppose that Paul, having previously referred the hardening of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles to the divine election by grace, now represents this choice by grace as having itself been conditioned by human conduct. On the contrary, this human conduct itself has been so ordained by God.—“As from works:” i.e. as if righteousness was to be obtained from works.—*They stumbled at that stumbling-stone* (lit. “at the stone of stumbling”): i.e. they have taken offence at the crucified Messiah (comp. 1 Cor. i. 23), and therefore have not believed. The “stone of stumbling” or “of offence” is borrowed from the passage from Isaiah which immediately follows (Is. viii. 14).

33. *As it is written*: A combination of Is. xxviii. 16, viii. 14, quoted with some freedom from the Greek version. In the first of these passages Jerusalem is compared to a firm corner-stone that has been tried and proved good; in the second, God himself is represented as a stone of stumbling. The apostle refers both passages to Christ, and finds in the “stumbling” a prophecy of the offence of the Jews at the “word of the cross.”

1. Read, “Brethren, the good-will of my heart and my prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.”—From the hard saying of ix. 31 sqq., the apostle turns again to his readers, that, addressing them directly from the depths of his heart, he may testify to his own generous sympathy with the lot of his people (see note on ix. 1 sq.).

2. He justifies his sympathy and his prayer for his countrymen, on the ground that their lot is not due to want of zeal for God, but want of understanding of the divine plan of salvation.

—*Zeal of God*: i.e. “zeal for God.”—*But not according to knowledge*: i.e. without true perception.

3. Literally, “For not recognizing the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they have not subjected themselves to the righteousness of God.”—The “righteousness of God” is here, as before, the righteousness which God establishes by grace.—“Not subjected themselves:” see notes on i. 5, vi. 16.—This verse gives the reason for the opinion that has just been pronounced.

4. Read, “For Christ is the end of the Law, unto righteousness for every one that believeth.”—In Christ the Law, from the works of which the Jews sought to become righteous, has attained its end, that *every one that believeth* (the emphasis being, not upon “every one,” but upon “believeth”) might be justified.

#### x. 5—10.

From the difference between the nature of the righteousness of the Law and the nature of righteousness of faith, further demonstration is now given that the Law really has found its end in Christ, and that therefore the Jewish zeal for the Law could not but fail to attain its aim. While righteousness from the Law demands action, righteousness of faith requires that we should believe with the heart and confess with the mouth the preaching concerning the Messiah, who came from heaven and rose again from the dead.

#### x. 5.

*For Moses* (the author of the Law that ended with Christ) *describeth the righteousness which is of the law* (when he saith) “The man which doeth (this) shall live by it” (i.e. this righteousness). But this is not the way unto salvation which corresponds with the divine plan.—The passage referred to is Levit. xviii. 5.

#### x. 6—8.

With the righteousness from the Law of which Moses writes, is contrasted the righteousness from faith, the very different utterances of which are likewise introduced in the words of the Old Testament, but are not ascribed to Moses.

6. *But the righteousness which is of faith* speaketh as follows.—The quotations are from Deut. xxx. 12—14, and deal with the fulfilment of the commandments recorded in the Book of the



Law. Of these it is there said that they are neither too difficult nor too far off. They are not up in heaven, so that one should not know how to bring them down in order to hear them and to keep them. Nor are they "beyond the sea," so that one must first cross the sea to bring them. But the word is very near, in our mouth and in our heart and in our hands. Paul has quoted here with great freedom. According to his interpretation, the words refer to the facts, which appear to the doubter impossible, of the descent of the Messiah from heaven and his resurrection from the dead. We must not ask doubtfully, "Who can go up into heaven" (to bring Christ down)? or "Who can go down into the under-world" (to bring Christ up)? i.e. we must not regard the preaching of a Messiah who descended from heaven and rose from the dead as an impossible message; but the righteousness that is of faith says, "The word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart" (i.e. the word of faith which we preach); it must be confessed with the mouth and believed with the heart. The words *that is*, three times repeated, are simply intended to introduce the explanation each time, as is often the case after quotations from the Scriptures.

7. *Into the deep*, should be "into the under-world."

9. Here we have an explanation how the word of faith must be in our mouth and in our heart.—Read, "For if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the word that Jesus is the Lord." This is the very opposite to the doubting question, Who is able to bring down the Messiah from heaven? Faith confesses that Jesus actually is the Lord who comes from heaven (comp. 1 Cor. xv. 47).—*And shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead*: This, again, is the very opposite to the doubting question whether any one can bring up Christ from the dead.

10. This verse shows the necessity of both faith in the heart and confession with the mouth.

#### x. 11—15.

It is of the very nature of this righteousness of faith that every one that believeth should obtain it, both Jew and Gentile alike; but since faith necessitates hearing, and hearing the sending forth of preachers, the gospel has been preached to all, both Jews and Gentiles.—As the apostle therefore has previously proved,

from the nature of the righteousness of faith in distinction from the righteousness of the Law, the unbelief of the Jews, so now conversely, from its universal destination for all believers, he demonstrates the divine appointment of the mission to the Gentiles.

11. The saying of Is. xxviii. 16 is repeated from ix. 33 in the form of a proof of what has been said in ver. 10; but now the emphasis is upon the fact that *whosoever* believeth shall be saved, in order to show from this that the righteousness of faith makes no distinction between Jews and Gentiles.

12. *For there is no difference*: comp. iii. 22.—Read, “For one and the same (i.e. Christ) is Lord over all, rich unto all that call upon him:” i.e. rich enough to give of his riches unto all that call upon him.—*Call upon him*: not worship, but call upon his name, i.e. acknowledge him as the Lord.

13. *Whosoever shall call*: lit. “every one who shall call.” Scriptural proof from Joel. iii. 5 [A.V. ii. 32]. For every one, let him be who he may, that calleth upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. In the prophet, deliverance from distress is promised to those who confess God and call upon His name; Paul refers the words to the confession of the name of Jesus as that of the Lord.

14. These questions are not to be taken as objections, but are intended to show that it is the will of God that the gospel should be preached to all. If all are to be saved who call upon the name of Christ, they must be able to call upon him. But for this purpose they must first have come to believe upon him. But in order that they may believe, they must be able to receive the gospel; and for this again it is necessary that there should be preachers, and that these should preach by divine commission.

15. Scriptural proof (from Is. lii. 7) of the divine commission given to the preachers. If the preachers, then, have been sent from God, it follows from this that it is part of the divine plan of salvation that every believer, Jew as well as Gentile, shall be saved by his faith. The apostle is not here concerned, in the first place, with the justification of his own mission to the Gentiles, but simply with the establishment of the fact that the gospel has been preached by divine commission to all, to Jews as well as Gentiles, and therefore it is not the ignorance of the Jews that is the cause of their exclusion from the Messianic community. The



words of the prophet really refer to the good tidings that God purposes to bring back His people from captivity. Paul, however, interprets them of the gospel of Christ.—The words “that proclaim peace” [A.V. “preach the gospel of peace”] should be omitted. They are found in Isaiah, but seem to have been omitted by the apostle and afterwards supplied by the copyists.—[*Bring glad tidings of good things*: the Greek verb here rendered “bring glad tidings of” is the same that is rendered “preach the gospel of,” in the preceding clause, now omitted. We should therefore either render “preach the gospel of good things,” or substitute “glad tidings” for gospel in ver. 16, where there is a direct reference to this quotation; otherwise the point of the expression, “they have not all obeyed the gospel,” in ver. 16, may be missed.]

#### x. 16—21.

The reason why Israel has not attained to salvation is to be found, then, not in the ignorance, but in the unbelief, of the Jews.

16. But not all have yielded obedience to the gospel which was preached to them as well as others. Even here it is the Jews who are especially meant, although it is not till ver. 19 that the words are expressly applied to them.—*For Esaias saith*: Is. liii. 1. The words there refer to the prophet’s own proclamation.—*Our report*, should be “our declaration.”

17. Read, “So faith cometh from the declaration, and the declaration through the word of Christ.”—The conclusion is drawn from the utterance of the prophet. Wherever faith arises, it is derived from the declaration of the gospel, but this has been brought about by the word of Christ. Hence if some have not believed, it is not because the proclamation of the word has been wanting.—“From the declaration:” i.e. from hearing the proclamation.

18. As little is the reason of unbelief to be found in the failure of this announcement to penetrate everywhere.—*But I say, Have they not heard?* The question demands an affirmative reply, and so cannot be regarded as an objection to the apostle’s representation, but only as a question which he raises in his own name: But I ask, &c., and then follows the reply, *Yes, verily*, &c. The reply is given in the words of Psalm xix. 4, accurately quoted from the Greek. The words refer originally to the manifestation

of God in nature, through the heavens and the heavenly bodies, but they are referred by Paul to the message of Christ which has penetrated everywhere, so that ignorance of it is out of the question.—*Their sound . . . their words*: referred by Paul to the preachers of the gospel.

19. It is not till we reach this verse that the express application to the Jews is made. But I must further ask, If this gospel has been proclaimed throughout the whole world, has *Israel*, of all nations, failed to become acquainted with it? The meaning of the question is not that perhaps the Jews did not know that the gospel was to be preached in all the world, but "has Israel, then, been unable to recognize the proclamation of the righteousness which is of faith?" The answer then states that the Old Testament itself, from Moses downwards, declares to the Jews the divine purpose of provoking them to jealousy, by the conversion of the Gentiles, who know not God and His word. The Jews therefore have had no lack of opportunity of recognizing God's plan of salvation. The quotation from "Moses," therefore, is not intended to prove that the divine purpose of converting the Gentiles cannot have been unknown to the Jews, but to show that the mission to the Gentiles was the very means by which God purposed to bring the Jews to the knowledge of His plan of salvation. This is the same idea that is applied below (xi. 11 sqq.) to the solution of the difficult problem presented to the Jewish-Christian mind by the mission to the Gentiles.—*First Moses saith*: From Moses downwards it has been proclaimed to the people of Israel by the sacred writers. The series of witnesses begins with him.—*I will provoke, &c.*, should be "I will make you jealous of a no-people, and I will make you angry with a people that hath no understanding." The quotation is from Deut. xxxii. 21. There God threatens the Israelites that because by their idolatry they have made Him jealous of a "no-god," He will make them jealous of a "no-people," i.e. He will bless the Canaanites instead of them. Paul, on the other hand, understands the passage to refer to the divine purpose of stirring up the jealousy of the Jews, by the bestowal upon the heathen of the perception of the divine plan of salvation, and so bringing the Jews themselves also to the recognition of it.—"A no-people:" i.e. the Gentiles who, as not belonging to the people of God, were



not acquainted with the divine will.—“Make you angry:” i.e. angry that these people, “without understanding,” should nevertheless have a better understanding of God’s plan of salvation than Israel, the bearer of the divine revelation.

20. *But Esaias is very bold*: The prophet dares to give to the people a saying that wounds its pride most cruelly. The saying is found in Is. lxxv. 1, where it refers to the people of Israel itself, to which God still reveals Himself, although it has turned away from Him. Paul interprets this in the same sort of way as he has done the preceding passage: If God has actually revealed His plan of salvation even to the Gentiles who did not inquire after it, then the reason for Jewish unbelief cannot be found in any want of knowledge of the gospel.

21. This verse, again in a passage from the prophet, gives the real reason why Israel has not obtained salvation. There has been no want of opportunity of becoming acquainted with the divine plan of salvation. The unbelief of the people has been the sole cause. This unbelief, indeed (according to xi. 7 sqq., comp. ix. 17 sq.), has itself been ordained by the divine counsel.—*But to Israel he saith*: Is. lxxv. 2. The words follow immediately upon those quoted in the preceding verse.—*I have stretched forth my hands*: not to protect the people, but that the people might grasp them. The meaning of the prophet is, that God has unceasingly sought the people with His favour, though it was disobedient and rebellious. The meaning of Paul is, that God has given to the people incessant opportunity of becoming acquainted with His plan of salvation (as was shown in vv. 5—10), but that the people in spite of this has remained unbelieving.—*Gainsaying people*: The prophet refers to rebellion against God’s commandments, but Paul applies his words to the opposition of the Jews to the gospel of the cross.

#### xi. 1—10.

In spite of the unbelief of the people, God has fulfilled His promise, but in the way which alone corresponds with His plan of salvation. He has in His grace chosen for Himself a remnant from the people, but the rest have not attained what they sought after, because their perception of the plan of salvation remained obscured.—The apostle’s argument here returns to its starting-

point (ix. 6—13), showing that in Israel the divine promise has been fulfilled exactly in the sense in which it was originally intended. If, according to what has now been said, the bulk of the people of Israel, in consequence of its unbelief, has failed to obtain salvation, it by no means follows from this that God has rejected His people and so has not kept His promise. For God in His grace has actually chosen for Himself a remnant of the people, which represents the true children of the promise from Israel. But by this very choice, which is of grace, God has intended to show that salvation comes not from works but from faith. While, then, this chosen number has really obtained that which Israel followed after, God has hardened the rest in their unbelief, and thereby revealed the law of His plan of salvation in its other aspect. It is not simply because they were unbelieving that God has excluded them from the promised salvation; but, because He wished to show that salvation is only to be obtained by means of belief in His free grace, He has let them fall into unbelief and hardened their hearts against the perception of His plan of salvation. Hence belief and unbelief alike depend upon the divine counsel, and both must serve to make plain the way in which God executes His promise.

1. *I say, then, Hath God cast away his people?* From my assertion that Israel has failed, in consequence of its persistent unbelief, to obtain the righteousness which it followed after, does it then follow that in my opinion God has actually cast away His people? The apostle rejects this blasphemous conclusion again with the exclamation, "Far be it" (see note on iii. 4), and he gives the reason why he should reject it in the words, *For I also am an Israelite*, &c. In this allusion to his own Jewish descent, Paul does not mean, as might be supposed, to adduce an example to prove that at any rate all are not rejected, but he wishes to point out that the thought which he has just rejected is altogether impossible for him, a born Jew, to entertain.—*Of the tribe of Benjamin*: comp. Phil. iii. 5.

2. *God hath not cast away his people*: The order of words in the Greek throws a strong emphasis on the word *not*.—*Which he foreknew*: i.e. as the people of His covenant, the bearer of His promise. The fact of His foreknowledge makes the impossibility of His having afterwards rejected them evident.—*Of Elias*: properly,



“in Elijah,” i.e. in the story of Elijah. The passage of Scripture which the apostle adduces in refutation of the thought suggested in the question in ver. 1, is found, not in ver 3, but ver. 4.—“How he appeareth before God against Israel:” i.e. when Elijah accuses the people of Israel before God.

3, 4. The accusation is found in 1 Kings xix. 10, the divine answer in 1 Kings xix. 18. Both passages are quoted with some freedom from the Greek.—*They have killed thy prophets*: “They” = the Israelites under Ahab and Jezebel who have deserted their own God.—*And I am left alone*: Elijah means, as the only prophet. Paul means, as the only one who has still remained faithful to God.—*But what saith the answer of God unto him?* In the original context, the words that follow are not a refutation of the despondent speech of the prophet, but a divine prophecy that only the seven thousand who have not bowed the knee before Baal shall be spared from the judgment of God that is coming. According to the apostle’s interpretation, on the other hand, the prophet, who in his despondent complaint declares himself the only one in the nation who has not deserted God, receives the reproving answer, that God has still preserved seven thousand who are faithful. Hence it is not true that God has cast off the whole people.

5. The application of the saying just quoted: As then, so at the present time also, God has preserved a remnant elected according to His grace, and this therefore, according to the principle of ix. 6, is the true Israel, in which God fulfils His promise.

6. A closer definition of the words, *according to the election of grace*. If the remnant has remained of grace, it cannot have remained because of works, else the grace upon which the choice of the bearers of the promise exclusively depends would not be grace any longer. Consequently these few have not been chosen because they were God-fearing, but they have remained God-fearing because they have been chosen. The promise, therefore, has been fulfilled, but in the way which alone corresponds with the divine plan of salvation.—The second half of this verse, *But if it be of works, &c.*, is an unauthentic interpolation. The Vatican MS. has it, reading, however, at the end, “Then work would not be grace.” Most of the older MSS. omit this addition entirely.

7, 8. These verses establish the result now attained. The

interpretation of ver. 7 depends upon the question whether we take the words, *Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for*, as a question or as an affirmation. In the first case, the meaning is, What then? Can it still be said that Israel has not obtained that which it followed after? No. Israel has obtained it. That is to say, the chosen number has, while the rest of course have been hardened. In the latter case, the meaning of the apostle is, What objection, then, can be raised to this? None. The fact now remains that Israel has not obtained that which it followed after, but the chosen number has obtained it, and so the promise has been fulfilled. Having regard to the double meaning of the word Israel, which at one time is used for the whole nation in the ordinary sense (ix. 31, x. 19), at another time for the true nucleus of the people of God (ix. 6), either interpretation would be possible; but, both on linguistic grounds and in view of the facts presented, the latter is preferable. The decision pronounced by the apostle, then, refers back to ix. 31. The fact, the explanation of which is the point at issue, is itself unassailable. The people as a whole has not obtained that which it followed after. But according to the divine plan of salvation, only a chosen number were to believe, and so to obtain salvation from faith. These chosen ones have actually obtained that which was followed after; and thus proof has been given after all that God has not cast off His people.—*The election*: i.e. the chosen number.—“The rest were hardened” (not *blinded*): Because they did not belong to the chosen, God let them fall into unbelief; and it is by the exclusion of these unbelievers that He reveals the law, according to which He carries out His counsel of salvation, viz. of grace alone by means of faith.—*As it is written*: The scriptural proof is drawn from Is. xxix. 10 and Deut. xxix. 4 (not Is. vi. 9), quoted somewhat loosely and combined together. The first passage deals with the hardening of the people against the prophet’s predictions of the invasion by the Assyrians. The second refers to the people’s persistent want of understanding in spite of God’s marvellous guidance of them in the wilderness. To the apostle the words have come to mean that God has Himself desired and caused the blinding of the bulk of the people to His plan of salvation revealed in the gospel.—“God has given to them a spirit of stupefaction:” God has sent upon them a spirit



that makes them deaf to the proclamation of the gospel.—“Eyes that they see not, and ears that they hear not:” He has given to them eyes and ears with the intention that they should not use them.—*Unto this day*: in the original connection, the day when Moses uttered the words of Deut. xxix. 2 sqq. to Israel; but what Paul means is down to his own time.

9, 10. A further quotation from Scripture, which is probably only added here because of the resemblance between the first words of ver. 10 and the quotation in ver. 8. The words are to be found in Ps. lxix. 22, 23, and are quoted loosely from the Greek version. The Psalmist is expressing his desire that his enemies may be involved in misfortune unawares,—that when they sit free from care, giving themselves up to enjoyment, they may be blinded so that they may not escape from danger when it falls upon them unexpectedly. Here, however, the words are applied to the spiritual blinding of the Jews, which has been divinely decreed. While they live on carelessly, as though the promise could not possibly fail them, in accordance with the counsel of God blindness and destruction shall fall upon them. The destruction that falls upon them probably means exclusion from the kingdom of God, but it is here represented as permanent, in contradiction to the argument that follows immediately afterwards. These two verses may reasonably be suspected of being a marginal note, made by some reader after the destruction of Jerusalem, which has crept into the text.—“Their table shall be made a snare” (their careless enjoyment shall plunge them into destruction) *and a trap* (literally, and a hunt, i.e. they shall fall a prey to destruction, as the game to the hunter) *and a stumbling-block* (over which they fall) *and a recompense* (for their unbelief).—*Let their eyes be darkened, &c.*, should be “darkened shall their eyes be, that they see not.”—*And bow down their back alway*: the standing figure for slavery.

xi. 11—36. *Third Section of the Second Division.*

It is not the purpose of God, however, that the unbelief divinely decreed against Israel, and its consequent exclusion from the Messianic salvation, shall be permanent, but only that it shall serve, by the calling of the Gentiles, to provoke Israel to imitation of them, and so ultimately to reveal the final object of the divine

plan of salvation, viz. that all, both Jews and Gentiles, shall owe their deliverance simply to the merciful grace of God.

### xi. 11, 12.

The fall decreed against Israel is not God's ultimate purpose ; but as Israel's fall was the means of salvation to the Gentiles, so again the calling of the Gentiles shall provoke Israel to imitate them, and so one day the salvation of the world shall be completed, when the people of Israel shall enter in full number into the Messianic kingdom.

11. Now at last the apostle turns to the solution of the problem why God has caused Israel to fall into unbelief, and so to the conciliatory conclusion of the whole discussion. The transition to this is formed again (as in xi. 1) by a false conclusion from what has been said by the apostle, in the shape of a question propounded by an opponent ; a conclusion which, as before, he rejects with the exclamation, "Far be it" (see note on iii. 4).—*Have they stumbled that they should fall?* Was this fall of Israel God's ultimate purpose? "Stumbling" is here the temporary hardening of Israel as distinguished from final fall (viz. permanent unbelief and irrevocable exclusion from Messianic salvation).—*Their fall*: the sin of their unbelief.—*Salvation is come unto the Gentiles*: The calling of the Gentiles to the Messianic salvation has resulted from their unbelief. The apostle here regards the Gentile mission as occasioned by the unbelief of the Jews (a view which certainly can scarcely be reconciled with the equal right of both on which he has previously laid such stress), and accordingly he perceives in their unbelief a divine provision for the purpose of giving salvation to the Gentiles.—*To provoke them to jealousy*: The expression is occasioned by the passage from Deut. xxxii. 21, which was quoted in x. 19. The grace which has happened to the Gentiles shall, in accordance with the divine purpose, make the Jews jealous of them, and so bring the Jews to faith. Thus it is no more the final aim of the divine plan of salvation than the fall of the Jews.

12. Now should be "But."—*The diminishing of them*: either "their loss of Messianic salvation" or "their loss numerically." The latter is to be preferred, on account of the better contrast it affords with the expression that follows.—*How much more their*



*fulness*: How much more shall the full, unrestricted admission of the whole people into the Messianic community tend to the wealth of the world. If the temporary exclusion of the bulk of the people has tended to produce *riches*, i.e. a rich blessing, for the world and especially for the Gentiles, how much greater will this blessing be when all Israel shall have entered into the Messianic community. The apostle expects, at the time which he here speaks of, the return of Christ and the dawn of the glory of the Messianic kingdom (see ver. 15).

#### xi. 13—24.

Parenthetic exhortation to the Gentiles not to exult over the Jews because of the salvation which they have obtained.

Whereas the apostle has hitherto always had Jewish-Christian readers in view, he now turns to the Gentile Christians. But even what he puts in the form of direct personal address to them is intended to soothe the Jewish-Christian portion of his readers.

13. Read, "But to you Gentiles I say; as long therefore as I have been an apostle of the Gentiles, I have glorified my service:" All the time that Paul has performed the duties of an apostle to the Gentiles, his purpose has always been at the same time to win his countrymen to the gospel, and so to make this calling of his glorious.—"I glorify my calling." What is meant is, his calling as an apostle to the Gentiles. The glorification consists in his serving, by this calling of his, the saving purpose of God, which is to provoke the Jews to emulation by the conversion of the Gentiles. The interpretation, "Inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles I fulfil my calling indeed, but at the same time I endeavour to provoke," &c., is wrong.

14. He makes his calling glorious by his success in provoking the Jews to emulation.

15. This verse shows how the conversion of the greatest possible number of Jews is a glorification of his calling as an apostle to the Gentiles. If the *casting away* of the Jews, on the part of God, has been the means of the "reconciliation of the world," i.e. the whole human race, but especially the Gentile world, what shall the impending *receiving* of them by God lead to but *life from the dead*, i.e. the resurrection of the dead with which the dawn of the Messianic period begins? That, therefore, is the

blessing which the future conversion of the Jews brings to "the world" (comp. ver. 12), a blessing incomparably greater than the reconciliation which the Gentiles have obtained in consequence of Jewish unbelief.

16. This verse proceeds to show that the conversion of Israel will certainly take place. For, for the sake of that part which is dedicated to God, and of its ancestors who were dedicated to God, the whole people is likewise dedicated, and will therefore one day assuredly be received by God to grace again.—*The first-fruit*: i.e. the number elected by God (ver. 7).—*The lump*, or "dough," strictly the "kneaded mass" from which the first-fruits of bread were taken. The illustration is taken from the dedicated first-fruits of bread commanded in Num. xv. 19—21.—*And if the root be holy, so are the branches*: a second figure to illustrate the same thought. By the root, Abraham is probably meant; by the branches, his natural descendants.

17, 18. The illustration of the root and branches is applied to the relation between the Messianic community and the Gentiles. The Jews, as belonging to the sacred stock, might hope in the natural order of things to be received by God; yet a certain number of them have been rejected by God, contrary to this natural order, and in their stead, contrary again to the natural order, Gentiles who were not of the same noble stock have been grafted into it through the grace of God. But if this be the true relation, what right have the Gentiles to boast over the Jews as though they were something superior to them?—It should be noticed that Paul here goes to the furthest possible point in his endeavour to meet the Jewish-Christian view. For, according to the comparison here made, the Jews certainly have ground as "Abraham's seed" to boast of their descent as such, inasmuch as they really have a natural pre-eminence over the Gentiles. And in the place of the complete abolition of all distinction between Jews and Gentiles in the Messianic community, we find the essentially Jewish-Christian idea that Israel as a people is still, as before, God's people of the covenant and the natural heir of the promise, while the calling of the Gentiles is only a reception into the national community of Israel. Here, as before, however, Paul has certainly avoided drawing the same practical conclusions from this view which were drawn by the Jewish



Christians.—*Some of the branches*: The apostle purposely says *some*, with a view to the discouragement of Gentile pride.—*A wild olive-tree*: The apostle pictures to himself one good tree and a number of wild trees.—*Wert grafted in among them*: i.e. on the good stem. Salvation, therefore, has not passed away from the people of Israel, as such, to the Gentiles, but only a portion of the people has been rejected for a time, and the gaps thus made have been filled up by Gentiles.—It is of course well known that the actual process is the reverse of this figure employed by the apostle. It is good branches that are grafted into a wild stem.—*The root and fatness of the olive-tree*: strictly “the root of the fatness of the olive-tree,” i.e. the root by which the sap is supplied. The sap represents the blessings bestowed upon the consecrated stem.

19. *Thou wilt say then*: This introduces an objection on the part of the Gentile Christian.

20. *Well*: i.e. that is well said, is quite true. According to the apostle, it really was the divine purpose that the Jews should be excluded in the first instance in order that the Gentiles might be called. But if the Gentile Christian thinks that he may therefore be proud of his own personal worth in contrast with the Jew, he forgets that God has only done this for the sake of showing that faith is the necessary condition of Messianic salvation. But this faith is itself the acknowledgment that those who have been called owe their salvation to no personal excellence, but to the free grace of God alone. If, therefore, the Gentile exalts himself over the Jew, this pride itself brings him into danger of losing salvation again.

21. Read, “For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare thee.” This verse gives the reason why the Gentile Christian should fear.—“Neither will he spare thee:” if thou exaltest thyself and so fallest into unbelief.

22. Instead therefore of exalting thyself, recognize, in that which has befallen the Jews, God’s severity; in that which has befallen thee, His goodness and grace.

23. *For God is able to graff them in again*: To the omnipotence of God their exclusion is not unalterable.

24. *The natural branches*: i.e. those which are by nature branches of the good olive-tree.

## xi. 25—32.

Final solution of the contradiction in which this rejection of the Jews and calling of the Gentiles stands to the promise given to the people of Israel. God has in part hardened Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in; but, after that, all Israel shall be converted. Thus, therefore, the promises of God stand good. The final purpose of God in these proceedings is, that all, both Jews and Gentiles, should appear as disobedient, so that God may have mercy upon all.

25. Read, "For I wish not to withhold from you [lit. "I wish not that you should be ignorant of"] this mystery, in order that ye may not be conceited (strictly, "wise in yourselves"). Hardness has befallen Israel in part until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and thus all Israel shall be saved," &c.—The persons addressed here, as in vv. 13 sqq., are still the Gentile Christians in Rome.—*This mystery*: The divine purpose of salvation was a mystery, because it had hitherto been concealed both from the Jews and the Gentiles. But to the members of the Messianic community the divine mysteries are no longer to remain mysteries, but are being made known to them by divine revelation. By the mystery here is meant the problem presented to religious thought in the calling of the Gentiles in place of the Jews. The solution of this problem is at the same time the justification of the Pauline mission to the Gentiles as founded in the saving purpose of God.—*Lest ye should be wise in your own conceits*: i.e. so that you may not pass sentence upon this fact according to your own standard, without inquiring into the divine purposes.—"Hardness has happened to Israel:" God has decreed hardness against Israel (see note on vv. 7, 8), but only *in part*, inasmuch as not all, but only a portion, of the nation has been hardened.—*The fulness*: the full number, as in ver. 12. What is meant here is not, as might be supposed, a certain number of the Gentiles, simply intended to fill up the gaps among the Jews, but the whole body of the Gentile nations.

26. *All Israel*: the whole nation. As appears also from ver. 32, Paul expects finally the conversion of all without distinction, both Jews and Gentiles. The opinion that only a comparatively small "remnant" is to be saved, and the great bulk of humanity is to be finally excluded from salvation, is not only



foreign, but actually contrary, to the words of the apostle.—*As it is written*: Is. lix. 20 sq., quoted freely from the Greek. The concluding words, “When I shall take away their sins,” are added from Is. xxvii. 9. The passage is intended by the prophet as a Messianic prophecy; Paul applies it to the conversion of Israel which is still to come, and so interprets the coming of the *deliverer* as referring to the return of Christ, and finds in the coming from *Sion* a proof that salvation is destined for all Israel. The work of the Redeemer is then interpreted more exactly to mean the emancipation of the house of Jacob from its *ungodliness*, i.e. from its disobedience to God, which in Paul’s view is more definitely its unbelief.

27. *For this, &c.*, should be “And this shall be my covenant with them:” i.e. Then will I establish my covenant with them, when I shall have taken away their sins. The promised covenant does not consist in the forgiveness of sins itself, but follows immediately upon it. What is meant by the establishment of the covenant is the reception into the Messianic kingdom.

28. *As concerning the gospel* (in respect of the gospel rejected by them), *they are enemies* (i.e. of God; see note on v. 10) *for your sakes*: God had made them enemies for the sake of the Gentiles, viz. in order that by their disobedience He might bring the Gentiles to salvation.—*But as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes*: i.e. in respect of God’s choice of Israel to be His people (see xi. 1), they are beloved of Him, on account of their descent from the chosen patriarchs.

29. “For God cannot repent of His gifts and calling” [lit. “For the gifts and calling of God are not to be repented of,” i.e. are unchangeable].—This verse is to show that in respect of the election they are beloved of God.—*The gifts*: the gifts of grace which God has given to His people (see ix. 4 sq.).—*And calling*: to Messianic salvation.

30, 31. For God deals with the Jews in precisely the same way in which He has dealt with you. He will lead them through disobedience and unbelief to obedience and belief, just as He has led you. For just as you Gentile Christians in time past *have not believed in God* (properly, “have been disobedient to God;” see ch. i.), *yet have now obtained mercy* (i.e. been pardoned and received into favour) *through their unbelief* (by means of their

disobedience); *even so have these also now not believed* (i.e. they have become disobedient), *that through your mercy* (i.e. the mercy that has befallen you) *they also may obtain mercy*: Here, again, the disobedience of the Jews to the divine will concerning salvation, or their disbelief in the gospel, is represented as intended by God.—*May obtain mercy*, should be “may now obtain mercy:” The apostle expects the conversion of the Jews also during the present age; this, however, is itself to terminate in the immediate future, in order to give place to the Messianic kingdom. According to the apostle, the order of future events (comp. vv. 15, 26) is: (1) the return of Christ, (2) the conversion of all Israel, (3) the resurrection of the dead, (4) the dawn of the Messianic kingdom.

32. The general principle of the divine order of salvation, whereby even the lot that has befallen the Jews is finally made right.—*For God hath concluded them all* (i.e. shut them all up together) *in unbelief* (properly “in disobedience”), *that he might have mercy upon all*: All men, both Jews and Gentiles, have been subjected by God to disobedience to His will concerning their salvation, and given up to sin and unbelief, in order that all may owe their deliverance simply to His merciful grace. Here, then, even the “unrighteousness of man” (i. 18—iii. 20) is expressly referred to a divine decree; it is required by God as the hypothesis of the “righteousness of God.” The same idea underlies not only ix. 13, 17 sq. 22, xi. 7 sq., but also v. 20 sqq., vii. 13, Gal. iii. 21 sq. Just as indisputably does the apostle assert here the final conversion of all without exception, every individual Jew and Gentile (comp. vv. 25, 26). Although the expression *all* is here used primarily, on account of the distinction between Jews and Gentiles, to show that “them” refers to both, it would still be quite arbitrary to lose sight of the individuals and to take this unconditional *all* to refer simply to the two classes, viz. Jews and Gentiles, and so still to reserve the final rejection of such and such a number of individuals from each class. To have recourse to the conclusion that salvation is offered to all, but is not accepted by all, is in palpable opposition to this whole section, which refers both the pardoning of all and the disobedience of all, as assumed in the pardon, to the divine counsel. It is impossible to see how there can be here, side by side with the divinely appointed (temporary) disobedience of all, a further (final) disobedience of some not caused by the



will of God. If, however, we do after all find in other passages even in Paul's writings the idea that there really are some who are eternally lost (1 Cor. i. 18; 2 Cor. ii. 15, iv. 3; comp. Rom. ix. 22), we must understand the relation between these two contradictory statements in the same way as the relation between the statement of the universal sinfulness and unrighteousness of men, and the acknowledgment of the possibility of the actual fulfilment of the Law even among the Gentiles.

xi. 33—36. *Conclusion of the First Part of the Epistle.*

Praise of the marvellous ways of divine wisdom.

33. Read, "O the depth of the wealth and the wisdom and the knowledge of God" (not *the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge*).—*The depth*: the inexhaustible abundance.—"*Wealth*:" not exactly abundance of grace, but wealth of resources for the execution of the divine purpose of salvation.—*His judgments*: which have made all subject to disobedience.—*His ways*: which all lead finally to salvation.

34. The wisdom of God is beyond all human understanding, still less does He require human counsel to enable Him to attain His purposes. The words are taken from Is. xl. 13.

35. Neither are God's purposes dependent upon any act or merit of men. The words bear some resemblance to the Hebrew of Job xli. 11 (in Heb. xli. 3). In the Alexandrian MS. of the Greek Bible, they have been inserted in Isaiah after the words quoted in the preceding verse.

36. Nothing depends upon human judgment, counsel or merit; everything solely upon God. His will is the beginning, middle and end of all. He is the only cause of all that happens; He of Himself alone brings all to completion; and He Himself is also the final goal and purpose of all.

SECOND PART. xii.—xiv.—*Practical.*

Various exhortations occasioned by the special circumstances of the Christian community in Rome.

xii.

On account of the mercy which the readers have found with God, they are exhorted to offer their own bodies to God as a living sacrifice, and to walk according to the insight which they

have so recently attained. Especially they are warned against self-exaltation, since they are all members of the same body, and admonished each to serve the whole body according to the gift of the Spirit that is given to him and each, in true brotherly love, showing to every one the honour due to him, in brotherly sympathy and helpfulness, to evince the true Christian disposition. Above all, the apostle exhorts them to be united, peaceful, ready to be reconciled, and to cherish a disposition to repay evil with good.—The warning against self-exaltation and the exhortation to brotherly agreement, upon which the chief stress is plainly laid, probably refer especially to the relation between Jewish and Gentile Christians.

xii. 1, 2. *General Introduction to the Special Exhortations.*

1. *I beseech you* (should be “exhort you”) . . . *by the mercies of God* (the exhortation is immediately connected with xi. 30—32) *that ye present your bodies* (the bodies are here compared with the sacrificial beasts, and these bodies, which apart from communion with Christ are instruments of sin, are to be offered to God as a sacrifice, i.e. to be His own; comp. vi. 12) *a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God* (not the blood of sacrificial beasts, but this living sacrifice, a body sanctified unto God and cleansed from sin, is well pleasing unto God), *which is your reasonable service* (properly, “as your reasonable worship”): The true reasonable worship of God, as opposed to the slaughter of sacrificial beasts, consists in this sanctification of our bodies to God.

2. *And be not conformed to this world* (strictly, “and shape not yourselves in accordance with the present age”), *but be ye transformed* (properly, “transform yourselves”): The apostle exhorts his readers, instead of bearing the mark of the present (transitory) age, instead of living and acting as do “the children of this world,” to change their form, i.e. their whole outward appearance, their conduct in the world.—*By the renewing of your mind*: The newly attained perception must be stamped upon their outward life.—Read, “That ye may prove what is the will of God, that which is good, well-pleasing and perfect:” These last words state what is the substance of the will of God.

xii. 3.

Here we pass from the general introduction to the special



exhortation that none should exalt himself over another, but each should serve the whole body in proportion to the gift bestowed upon him.—*For I say* (a more exact explanation of what is meant by vv. 1, 2), *through the grace given unto me* (i.e. by virtue of my apostolic calling: hence we see that Paul by no means regards Rome as another man's mission-field), *to every man that is among you* (the exhortation is directed to every individual member of the community of whatever school or whatever rank), *not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think* (not to have a higher opinion of himself than is fitting), *but to think soberly* (properly, to have such a disposition that he maintains moderation). [In the Greek there is a kind of play upon words here which is difficult to reproduce, but which might be imitated by rendering, "not to be high-minded beyond that which he ought to mind, but to mind to be sober-minded:" see note on ver. 16].—*The measure of faith*: The measure of strength and firmness of faith, and of the knowledge that has been obtained by progress in the life of faith. The weak, then, must not judge the faith of another, nor the strong exalt himself over the weak in the faith.

xii. 4—8.

As in one and the same body there are many members, each of which has its own particular function, so we, the many, are likewise in Christ a body having many members, and in which one member serves another. Hence although we show our connection with the one body in various ways, yet none must despise another, or exalt his own gift at the expense of another. The gifts of grace are very various, and so, instead of looking proudly down upon those who are differently endowed from himself, each one should rather fulfil with true faithfulness his own peculiar task which has been appointed to him by the divine Spirit, the special calling which has fallen to him as an individual member of this body.

5. *One body in Christ*: This same figure is found in 1 Cor. vi. 15 sqq. x. 17, xii. 12 sqq. Christ is regarded, not as the head, but as the soul of the body.—*And every one*: properly, "but in regard to the relation of the individuals."

6. *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us*: The conclusion of the sentence, that should follow, "let us use them in the service of the kingdom of God," is omitted, or

rather is appended in a shortened form to each individual gift.—*Gifts*: properly, gifts of grace.—From a religious point of view, each special spiritual gift appears as a gift of grace, which has been given that it may be spent in the service of the divine kingdom. Every special activity in the community is separately referred to a distinct gift of grace (comp. 1 Cor. xii. 4 sqq.).—

*According to the proportion of faith*: i.e. according to the measure of the power of faith bestowed upon him. By prophecy we must understand the enthusiastic proclamation of the divine plan of salvation, the revelation of the divine mysteries, and not simply a foretelling of the future.

7. *Or ministry* (i.e. “service”): If any one has the gift of serving, let him exercise it in serving. By this “serving” is to be understood the duty of a “serving brother” or “deacon,” i.e. the care of the poor (so 1 Cor. xvi. 15; 2 Cor. viii. 4, 19 sq., &c.).—*He that teacheth*: lit. “If it be one that teacheth (let him exercise his gift), in teaching.” In 1 Cor. xii. 28 sq. also, the gift of teaching is distinguished from that of prophecy.

8. *He that exhorteth*: The gift of exhortation seems to have manifested itself in the edifying application of the word of Scripture after it had been read (see Acts xiii. 15).—*He that giveth*: i.e. that gives from his own private property for the benefit of the poor. This delight in the self-sacrifice of giving appeared to be a special gift of grace.—*With simplicity*: without mental reservation or hypocrisy.—*He that ruleth*: The ability to direct a community is also reckoned as one of the gifts of grace (see 1 Cor. xii. 28).—*With diligence*: let him be zealous in the exercise of his office.—*He that showeth mercy*: This seems to refer especially to the care of the sick.

## xii. 9, 10.

From the thought that each should use his special gift in the service of the whole body, and so practically demonstrate that he is a member of the one body, the apostle turns, in the exhortations that follow, to all the members of the community without distinction.

9. The chief duty that lies upon all is love and concord.—*Without dissimulation*: without hypocrisy.—*Abhor that which is evil, &c.*: lit. “Abhorring the evil, cleaving to the good, in brotherly



love kindly affectioned one to another," &c.—*Evil . . . good*: the evil or good which one may evince towards another.

10. *In honour preferring one another*: the very opposite to self-exaltation (ver. 3).

xii. 11, 12.

Further exhortations now follow, to show a Christian disposition generally, in which all, notwithstanding their different gifts, must be at one.

11. *Not slothful in business*, should be "not slack in zeal:" i.e. in zeal for the execution of the calling that has been appointed to each in the service of the whole body.—*Fervent in spirit*: glowing with the fire of the Holy Spirit. The same figure is found in Acts xviii. 25.—*Serving the Lord*, i.e. Christ. There is another reading, "Serving the time" or "adapting yourselves to the season," but this is not suitable here [and has little support from the MSS.].

12. *In hope*, should be "in the hope," i.e. the hope of future glory.—*Patient in tribulation*: Tribulation is a test of hope (v. 3).

xii. 13—21.

The exhortations now have again a direct practical reference to intercourse with others.

13. *Distributing to the necessity of saints*: lit. "sharing in the necessities of the saints," i.e. by active assistance.—*Given to hospitality*: lit. "following after hospitality."

14. Comp. Matt. v. 44. This exhortation applied not only to the feeling towards those who are not Christians, but also to the party quarrels in the community.

15. Share, in a brotherly manner, in everything that affects another, be it joy or suffering.

16. This verse returns to the starting-point of all the individual exhortations from which the apostle set out in ver. 3.—The use of Greek words of similar sound which appears here again, as in ver. 3, is given by rendering "be of the same *mind*" [lit. "minding the same thing"] and "*mind* not high things." [To keep it up we should render the last clause "be not high-minded."]—*Condescend to men of low estate* [lit. "to the lowly," which might refer either to "men" understood or to "things" after "high things"]: have fellowship with them.—*Be not wise in*

*your own conceits*: The same expression in Greek as in xi. 25, but here it is not conceited judgments as to the course of Providence, but an overbearing disposition towards others, that is meant.

17. *Recompense to no man evil for evil*: essentially the same exhortation as in ver. 14.—*Provide things honest*: devote yourselves to that which is good generally, so that no one can justly accuse you of evil.

18. *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you*: You should always be ready for peace; and if there be no peace, at least the blame must not be yours.

19. *Give place unto wrath*: properly, "give place to the wrath;" i.e. not, let your wrath have vent; but, leave vengeance to the divine wrath.—This exhortation is made specially impressive by the personal address, *dearly beloved*, and hence doubtless refers, like what has preceded, to some special circumstances of the community.—*For it is written*: Deut. xxxii. 35. The quotation here is nearer to the Hebrew than to the Greek version. The words are similarly quoted Heb. x. 30.

20. This verse enforces the duty of conduct directly opposed to feelings of vengeance.—*Therefore*, should be "But."—*If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink* (word for word from the Greek version of Prov. xxv. 11), *for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head*: This represents the shame which is thus brought upon an adversary. Altogether perverted is the interpretation, "in so doing thou wilt involve him in severe divine punishment."

21. Do not allow yourself to be excited to the repayment of evil with evil, but repay evil with good, and so overcome the evil.

### xiii. 1—7.

Warning against defiance of the civil power, since it also has been ordained of God and has received commission from God for the maintenance of the moral order. This warning, like the special exhortation of ver. 7 to pay to the government the customs and taxes that are due, was occasioned by the peculiar position of the Christians in the imperial capital, and the restless spirit of the Jewish population there, but has also of course a general application.

1. *Every soul*: Christians as well as others.—*Be subject unto*:



lit. "range himself under." The expression is purposely selected with reference to the *ordained of God*, which follows [which we might render "arranged by God," to keep up the apostle's use of two similar words].—*The higher powers*: properly, "the powers set over him," i.e. by divine appointment, as is shown by the next words.—*For there is no power but of God*: The origin of the Gentile government is distinctly traced to God. At that time there was a wide-spread opinion among the Jews that the Gentile supremacy over the chosen people of God was a miserable state of slavery for them, opposed to the divine purpose, and that in the coming age of the world the Jews would bear sway over the Gentiles. The Gentile government thus seemed to the Jews to be of diabolic rather than divine origin, and they believed themselves to be in a continual state of war with it, in which every riot, every refusal or evasion of taxes and customs, was allowable. This view the apostle here opposes as clearly as possible. According to him, the divine right of the government rests upon that maintenance of the moral order which has been committed to it by God (vv. 3 sq.). He has in his mind, moreover, every existing government under the power of which Christians find themselves, without further inquiry as to its special origin. Of course all this has nothing to do with the divine right of a particular form of government.

2. *Resisteth the ordinance of God*: Disobedience to the government is, therefore, disobedience to God himself.—*Damnation*, should be "condemnation." The punishment inflicted by the government upon those who resist is regarded as a divine penalty.

3. Read, "For rulers are not to be feared for a good deed, but for an evil deed."—If the government decrees a penalty, it does so, not on account of good conduct, but of bad conduct. Only he who does wrong has reason to be afraid. The apostle is thinking here of offences against moral and civil order by individuals, which even the Gentile authorities have a perfect right to punish.

4. This verse explains why only the evil-doer need be afraid of the Gentile authorities.—*To thee for good*: to do good to thee also, viz. to maintain justice and order.—*He beareth . . . the sword*: a vivid picture of the magisterial penal office, especially of the power of life and death. The apostle does not doubt the

right of capital punishment, which was at that time never questioned.—*Not in vain*: not without reason. If, then, you do evil, you have of course every reason to fear him.—“A revenger for wrath:” to manifest the divine wrath against the evil-doer.

5. Wherefore it is necessary to be subject, not only because the punishment by the magistrate brings God’s wrath upon you, but also because the conscience should be bound to God’s order.—*Ye must needs be*: lit. “it is necessary to be.”

6. *For for this cause* (because ye must recognize in the commands of the ruling powers a divine appointment) *pay ye tribute also*: These words are not an admonition (ye must pay tribute), but are intended to explain the divine right of a state of things which practically exists, and which the individual cannot escape from without blame.—*For they are God’s ministers*: properly, “God’s sacrificial priests.” The collecting of the taxes is compared to the collecting of gifts for sacrifice, inasmuch as the taxes are for the purpose of maintaining a civil order in accordance with the divine will, and the collection of them is, as it were, a service to be done to God.—*Attending continually upon this very thing*: i.e. the fulfilment of this “sacrificial service” to God.

7. The admonition to the fulfilment of civil duties is brought under the general demand to give to every one what is due to him.—*Tribute to whom tribute is due*: lit. “to him who (demands) tribute, tribute,” &c.

xiii. 8—10.

The general admonition to give to every one what is due, is reduced to the duty of love, as the true fulfilment of the Law. These verses are very similar to Matt. xxii. 37—40.

8. *Owe no man anything* (this brings forward once more the general idea of ver. 7) *but to love one another*: You can punctually fulfil all obligations to others. In love alone you can never satisfy one another. In this, each always remains the other’s debtor. By love, we must understand brotherly love, so that we return to what has already been said in xii. 9 sqq.—*For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law*: How this has been done is explained in vv. 9, 10. He that loveth another fulfils in so doing all the special commandments enumerated in ver. 9, which are, indeed, all embraced in the admonition to do no evil to another. The ground on which the commandment of love given



here rests, is chosen as suitable in the first place for Jewish-Christian readers.

9. An enumeration of the commandments from Exod. xx. 13 sqq., except that there, after "Thou shalt not steal," comes "Thou shalt not bear false witness," which some of the MSS. have inserted here. [In the majority of the old MSS. it does not appear here.] —*It is briefly comprehended*: summed up in one leading thought. —*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*: Levit. xix. 18.

10. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour* (it offends against none of the duties to one's neighbour enumerated in ver. 9), *therefore love is the fulfilling of the law*: This proposition of ver. 8 is emphatically repeated as a conclusion from what has now been said. Therefore you may prove your fidelity to the Law, the apostle means, by loving your neighbour (the believing brother) and doing no evil in word or deed to any one.

#### xiii. 11—14.

An additional reason for the exhortations just given is to be found in the impending return of Christ. Since the night of the present age is drawing to a close, and the day of the Messianic glory is immediately at hand, they that believe should walk as children of light, i.e. in such a manner as is seemly in broad daylight.

11. *And that* (i.e. and do that, viz. what has been said in vv. 8—10), *knowing the time* (since ye understand the meaning of the present time and its signs), *that now it is high time* (a closer definition of the time that is known to them, the hour has already come) *to awake out of sleep* (i.e. from the sleep of sin).—*For now is our salvation nearer, &c.*: for the dawn of the Messianic glory has now advanced nearer than it was at the time when we first became believers.—*When we believed* = "when we became believers."

12. *The night is far spent*: It is near its end. The night is the present age of the world.—*The day is at hand*: The Messianic age is close at hand.—*Let us therefore* (our perception of the times makes the reason for the urgency of this admonition evident to us) *cast off* (as one takes off the clothes worn at night and exchanges them for those worn by day) *the works of darkness* (represented as clothes in which the body is clothed at night),

and let us put on the armour of light (the armour suitable to the light, which the children of light put on): Here the works of men are represented under a figure as clothes which he puts on his body. The *works of darkness* are works which are done in darkness under the dominion of sin. The *armour of light* represents the works which are suitable to the light, i.e. to the clear daylight of the Messianic time (comp. 2 Cor. x. 4; 1 Thess. v. 8).

13. [*Honestly*, i.e. honourably and with propriety generally.]—*As in the day*: as it is fitting to walk by daylight.—*Not in rioting and drunkenness*: better, “not in nightly revellings and drinking-bouts.”—*Chambering*: lit. “couches.”

14. *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*: a figurative expression for life in communion with him, by means of the Spirit of Christ which dwells in believers (viii. 9). They must let this Spirit bear sway in them. Elsewhere (Gal. iii. 27) the putting on of Christ is represented as having already taken place, viz. in baptism, in which the believers have entered into a mysterious communion with Christ.—*And make not provision for the flesh*: It is altogether contrary to the apostle’s meaning to take these words to refer to a proper care for the wants of the body. The flesh is here, as always, regarded as the seat of sinful lusts; *provision for the flesh* is therefore practically the same as the indulgence of its lusts.

#### xiv.

The general exhortation to mutual love and toleration is applied to the particular relations between the “strong” and the “weak” in the faith. The latter, who are not the apostle’s Jewish-Christian readers generally, but Christian Essenes (see pp. 39 sq.), regard the use of flesh or wine as defiling, and observe a distinction between sacred and profane days. The former have left such scruples behind them. The apostle admonishes the “weak” not to judge others on account of their freer customs, and conversely the strong not to despise the weak because of their scruples. In these matters each must obey his own conscience, and only take care that everything that he does, or omits, is to the glory of the Lord, whose we are, whether we live or die. But, above all, it is the special duty of the strong in the faith to take care not to give any offence to a weaker brother, and rather to deny themselves that which is allowed, than by the exercise of



their liberty to lead away others to a course of conduct which is contrary to their own conscience and so to them is sinful.—The apostle here states the very same principles as in the discussion of the question of eating flesh offered to idols (1 Cor. viii.). The warmth with which he here charges his readers to be considerate to the weak, is only an additional proof of the apostle's own conciliatory disposition. For this consideration for the "weaker brethren" he would certainly show still more to those who thought themselves bound not to the strange regulations of the sect of the Essenes, but simply to the Mosaic laws regarding meats.

1. *Him that is weak in the faith*: The apostle regards it as a proof of weakness in the faith if any one is unable to shake off the scrupulous obligation to external rules, the observance or non-observance of which is in itself a matter of entire indifference to the Messianic believer. — *Receive ye*: have brotherly communion with him, notwithstanding his weakness.—*Not to doubtful disputations*: not so as to excite doubtful thoughts in him. [Lit. "not to decisions of doubts," which may mean either, "not so that you may judge his doubts," or "not so as to impose upon him in the decision of doubtful questions."]

2. Explanation of the particular case to which this exhortation refers. The one is convinced that, as a believer in the Messiah, he may eat anything. He that is weak, on the other hand, lives on vegetable food only.

3. To each of the two parties the apostle directs a special exhortation. He who has freer ideas is not to despise the other who *eateth not*, i.e. who abstains from meat. The more scrupulous must not *judge* him who has no scruples about eating meat, must not condemn his conduct as sinful, or declare that it excludes him from the Messianic community. This express recognition of the right of those who have freer ideas, by those who are themselves more strict, is demanded therefore by the apostle as the condition of brotherly fellowship, and only on this assumption are the exhortations to the strong to spare the consciences of the weak valid. Hence those who are free must not be deprived of their rights in the Christian community, under the pretext of avoiding offence to others.—*For God hath received him*: i.e. him who eats. God has received him into communion with Himself, and no man has the right, therefore, to declare him excluded from it.

4. Address to the weak.—*Another man's servant*: one who is in Christ's service, not in yours.—*To his own master he standeth or falleth*: It is his own master's affair, and his only, to decide whether he stands in communion with him or by sin falls away from it.—*Yea, he shall be*, &c., should be, "But he will stand, for the Lord hath power to make him stand:" He will not be excluded from the communion of the Lord on account of that for which the other judges him; for, in opposition to him who judges, "the Lord (so the best MSS. read, instead of *God*) hath power to make him stand," i.e. to keep him in communion with himself.

5. Here the apostle comes to the other point in dispute, the distinction between sacred and ordinary days. In this matter there was the same difference between Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians generally (comp. Gal. iv. 10).

6. *He that regardeth the day* (he that attends carefully to the strict observance of the definite sacred day) *regardeth it unto the Lord* (i.e. as a service, in the conviction that the Lord so wills it).—*And he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it*, should be omitted.—*He that eateth, eateth to the Lord* (i.e. in the conviction that in communion with Christ the observance of such rules is worthless), *for he giveth God thanks*: He says grace over his meat, which he certainly could not do if he thought that the Lord had forbidden him to partake of it.—Conversely, *he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not* (in the service of the Lord he avoids such food, because he thinks that to partake of flesh is a sin in the sight of the Lord), *and giveth God thanks*: He also pronounces a thanksgiving over his vegetable food, which he holds to be the only food allowed.

7—9. The believer, whether he observe these rules or not, both in what he does and what he omits, stands always in the service of his Lord. Neither in living, nor in dying, do we serve our own selfish purposes, for our living and dying are a living and dying in communion with the Lord, to whom, both living and dying, we belong.—"For to this end Christ both died and became alive again" [lit. "lived"]: This is the ground of the statement that living and dying we belong to him. The object of his death and resurrection was to make him the Lord of dead and living.—*And rose*, should be omitted.



10. Here the apostle returns again to the dispute between the "strong" and the "weak," in order that he may show, from the similar relation of servants in which both stand to Christ, how unjustifiable it is for one either to judge or to despise the other.—"But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother; or thou, why dost thou despise thy brother?"—*Thou*: in opposition to the Lord, to whom the other belongs both in what he does and in what he does not do.—*Why dost thou judge?* By what right dost thou take upon thyself to judge? The readers themselves could give the answer to the question.—*For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ*: This gives the reason for the answer, which is really to be inferred from the question itself. The only one who has a right to judge us all is Christ, before whose judgment-seat we shall all one day appear.—*Stand*: lit. "be placed."—*Christ*: some of the MSS. read "God." The reading "Christ" agrees with 2 Cor. v. 10, the reading "God" with Rom. ii. 16. [The MSS. authority is very strong in favour of the latter reading.]

11. Scriptural proof that judgment belongs to God (or Christ) alone. The passage is from Is. xlv. 23, very loosely quoted from the Greek version. There the prophet is speaking of the Messianic time when all the Gentiles will worship God; but Paul interprets the passage of the last judgment, when all men will submit themselves to the just sentence of God, and every objection will be silenced, though God recognize as His own those who are condemned or despised by men.

12. If, then, God (or Christ) has reserved judgment for himself alone, every one will be personally responsible to God (comp. ver. 4).

13. *Let us not therefore judge one another any more*: The exhortation not to judge is here addressed of course to both parties, so that contempt is regarded as itself a kind of judging.—*But judge this rather*: A play upon words in the Greek is thus kept up, but the meaning would be clearer if we translated, "but rather esteem it right."

14. From this point the apostle confines his exhortations exclusively to the strong, with whose convictions he entirely agrees, but whose conduct toward the weak he earnestly deprecates as disastrous to Christian fellowship.—*Am persuaded by the Lord*

*Jesus: By*, should be “in;” I am convinced of it by virtue of the insight which I have obtained in communion with Christ.—*Unclean*: lit. “common,” in the sense of unclean.—*But to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean*: Hence he may not without sin partake even of that which is clean in itself.

15. Read, “For if thy brother be grieved by thy meat, thou no longer walkest according to love:” This introduces the exhortation, resulting from what has been said, not to lead away another to anything that he regards as sin.—“According to love:” which is after all the supreme law for the mutual intercourse of believers (see xiii. 8 sqq.).—*Destroy not him* (i.e. lead him not to perdition) . . . *for whom Christ died*: This is intended to bring out as sharply as possible the contrast between what Christ has done for this brother, as well as for the rest, and what the other is on the point of doing to him. Christ died to deliver him also from eternal death, and you will not so much as abstain from that food, by partaking of which you lead him astray to sin and draw down eternal death upon him.

16. *Let not then your good be evil spoken of* (or blasphemed against): The “good” can scarcely mean the meat, which the strong receive with thanksgiving as a gift of God, so that the “blaspheming” is not the reviling of this gift of God on the part of the weak. The *good* is explained in the very next verse as *the kingdom of God*, and the blaspheming proceeds from the unbelievers who slander this supreme good of the believers, taking occasion to blaspheme against this kingdom of God from the conduct of believers themselves, when they see that they do not shrink from robbing their fellow-believers of this very treasure rather than give up the most insignificant things themselves.

17. For the good, which by such conduct on your part is exposed to the blaspheming of unbelievers, viz. *the kingdom of God*, “is not eating and drinking.” In the kingdom of God, questions of eating and drinking are not raised, and it cannot be gained or lost by one’s opinion that one may, or may not, eat or drink such and such things.—*But righteousness and peace and joy* “in the Holy Spirit:” Its effect is seen in a disposition well pleasing to God, in the peace of its members among themselves and in the common joy which the Holy Spirit gives. Where,



then, these characteristics are wanting, there the kingdom of God cannot be won.

18. Read, "For he who therein serveth Christ" (i.e. who serves Christ in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, instead of by eating or not eating, drinking or not drinking) *is acceptable to God* (and can therefore inherit the kingdom) *and approved of men* (acts so that his good cannot be blasphemed of men).

19. *Edify*: i.e. build up. The apostle delights to compare the community to a house which is being built (1 Cor. iii. 9 sqq.). To the building of this house everything serves which serves for the advancement of the Christian life, and especially of peace among those who belong to the house (1 Cor. viii. 1, 10 [where the Greek, which is rendered *be emboldened*, is literally "be built up," the same that is usually rendered "edified"], x. 23, xiv. 3, 4, 5, 12, 17, 26; 2 Cor. x. 8, xii. 19, xiii. 10). This edification or building up, however, must be mutual.

20. If the community be a house, and everything which happens in the life of the community is to serve for "edification," there results from this point of view also the duty of not pulling down again by unbrotherly behaviour (and especially by the difficulties which the strong may cause to the weak) the divine edifice which has been begun.—*Destroy not*: lit. "do not undo" or "break up." This breaking up or pulling down is opposed to building up (comp. 2 Cor. v. 1; Gal. ii. 18).—*For meat . . . the work of God*: a sharp contrast between so paltry a matter on the one hand, and so lofty on the other.—*All things indeed are pure* (an emphatic repetition of the thought contained in ver. 14, in order to bring out the contrast the more sharply), *but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence*: The eating of that which in itself is clean is evil to him, inasmuch as it is an injury to his own soul and gives occasion to sin.

21. Conversely, it is good (lit. beautiful) in such a case, where that which is good in itself becomes evil, to eat no flesh at all, and drink no wine, and abstain from everything of any kind that gives offence to a brother.—*Is made weak*: should be "is weak." [Some of the best MSS. omit "or is offended or is weak."]

22. *Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God*: We should read here, with the best MSS., "Keep thou the faith, which thou hast in thyself, before God." Faith, here as elsewhere, is the

moral conviction, springing from a living Christianity, of the indifference of such external things to the life of salvation.—“Keep it to thyself:” Do not insist upon it where you would only do harm by it.—*Happy is he that condemneth not himself* (strictly, judgeth not himself, i.e. has no need to accuse himself) *in that thing which he alloweth* (in that use of food which he approves of).

23. *And he that doubteth* (i.e. doubteth whether he may eat or not) “is condemned” (has incurred the judgment of God, because his conduct is inconsistent with his moral conviction). In the Greek of vv. 22, 23, there is a play upon words which cannot be imitated in translation.—[The force of it is lost in the mere repetition in English of the word “condemn;” and “damned” in the second verse now gives quite a false meaning. The apostle’s idea is kept up if we render, “happy is he that judgeth not himself,” and then, “he that doubteth is (not only judged but actually) condemned if he eat.”]—*For* (“And”) *whatsoever is not of faith is sin*: A general proposition which brings the discussion to a close. Everything is sin, i.e. proceeds from sin, which does not proceed from faith, i.e. from the believer’s own clear conviction.

## APPENDIX.

### xv. xvi.

These two chapters are of very doubtful authenticity (see notes on xv. 3, 4, 5, 8—13, 19, &c.).

### xv. 1—13.

Additional exhortation to toleration and harmony, since Christ came indeed in the first place for the sake of the Jews, to secure to them the promises given to the fathers, but yet the Gentiles also have found mercy, as many passages of Scripture testify.

### xv. 1—7.

1. The warning that it is the duty of the strong to bear the infirmities of the weak, in this connection, can only be a repetition of what was said in ch. xiv. The strong, therefore, are those



who are freer in their opinions as to the use of meat and wine.—*Ought*, i.e. “it is our duty.”—*And not to please ourselves*, but rather to please others (ver. 2).

2. *Let every one of us please his neighbour*: seek by his conduct to earn the approval of the other. The context shows that this only refers here to the consideration of the strong for the weak; but the thought has also a wider application.—“For good:” seems to refer to xiv. 16.—*To edification*: see xiv. 19.

3. *For even Christ*: This appeal to the example of Christ is made, not in support of the exhortation to be considerate to the weak, but in support of the more general demand not to please oneself, i.e. not to have one’s own interest in view. The authority adduced from Ps. lxix. 9, after the Greek version, treats of the insults to which a pious man has been subject, and is here interpreted as referring to Christ (in the sense, it would seem, that Christ patiently took insults upon himself), so as to show that he lived not to please himself but others. In this chapter there is repeated reference to the example of Christ.—*That reproached thee*: This seems to be taken here to refer, not to God, as in the original, but to “the other” for whose pleasure Christ lives. Who is to be understood, however, by this reviled person, whose reproach Christ experiences, it is difficult to say.

4. Read, “For that which has been written has been written for our instruction, in order that through patience and through the comfort of the Scriptures we may have hope.”—“For that which has been written, &c.,” These words, which remind us of iv. 13 sqq., are intended to justify the quotation from Scripture. The reference found in the quotation to the insults which Christ bears for others, is taken as an exhortation to patience, applicable to us.—“That we through patience and the comfort of the Scriptures may have hope:” Considering the connection with ch. xiv., it is natural to refer the *patience* to consideration for the weak. After verse 3, however, we can only understand it of patience in suffering, which (as in v. 3 sq.) is immediately connected with *hope*. From first to last there is, indeed, no mention of sufferings which befall the Christians.—“And through the comfort of the Scripture:” the comfort and encouragement which Scripture affords the sufferers.

5. “But the God of patience and comfort (the God who gives

patience and comfort) grant you to be of the same mind one toward another :” This exhortation to harmony is a recurrence to what was said in xii. 16, and, as vv. 8 sqq. show, it is applied to the relation between Jewish and Gentile Christians. The dependence of the exhortation upon the name here given to God can only be made intelligible by taking patience in this verse to refer to consideration for others, and not, as in ver. 4, to patience in suffering.—*According to Christ Jesus*: according to the example of Christ.

6. *God, even the Father*, should be “the God and Father.”—The united glorification of God is the goal of the harmony of the believers, which God is prayed to grant.

7. *Wherefore receive ye one another*: A similar exhortation to that of xiv. 1, but referring here not to the relation between the strong and the weak, but, as the sequel shows, to brotherly fellowship between Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians.—*As Christ also received us*, “As Christ also received you” [the MSS. vary between “us” and “you,” but the evidence is in favour of the latter reading]: Another appeal to the moral example of Christ; and here even Christ’s work of redemption itself is made an example for us.

xv. 8—13.

The exhortation just given is supported by the statement that Christ, although he came in the first instance to assist the Jews to attain what belonged to them, still in mercy took up the cause of the Gentiles also, and so fulfilled the prophecies of Scripture. Paul himself has already said (xi. 28) that the Jews are beloved of God for the fathers’ sake, and he regards the ultimate conversion of the whole people as the final fulfilment of the promise given to the fathers. On the other hand, such a distinction as is made here between Jews and Gentiles is very different from anything that is said there. We may also compare xi. 30—32, where the apostle speaks of both sections as called to salvation simply by the grace and mercy of God. Here, on the other hand, it is said that the calling of the Jews is of right, that of the Gentiles of grace.

8. Read, “For I say that Jesus Christ became a minister of the circumcision for the sake of the truth of God, to confirm the promises given to the fathers.”—“A servant of the circumcision:”



According to this, Christ came in the first place for the sake of the Jews, to redeem the promise which God had given to them.

9. "But that the Gentiles may praise God for his mercy:" Christ being a servant of the Jews, the Gentiles must conclude that they, in distinction from the Jews, have only been called by mercy.—*As it is written*: Here follows a series of Biblical sayings to prove the calling of the Gentiles by grace. Elsewhere it is with scriptural proof, not of the conversion of the Gentiles generally, but of the equality of the Gentiles with the Jews, that Paul is concerned. The quotations that follow here are all taken accurately from the Greek version.—*For this cause, &c.*: Ps. xviii. 49. There it is David who speaks, proclaiming to all nations the great things God has done unto him.

10. *And again he saith*: i.e. God saith. The words are from Deut. xxxii. 43. The original means that the Gentiles shall extol the people of God.

11. *And again*, i.e. "again he saith:" Ps. cxvii. 1. [The words from Deut. xxxii. 43, might perhaps be taken to be the words of God, though more probably meant to be the words of Moses himself, the words of Jehovah ending with ver. 42; but in Ps. cxvii. it is certainly the Psalmist who calls upon the nations to praise God, and not God who speaks. Hence it would be better to translate, "*It saith.*"]

12. *And again Esaias saith*: Is. xi. 10. [Lit. "There shall be the root of Jesse and one that ariseth to rule over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles hope." The word rendered "ariseth" is the same that is habitually used in speaking of the resurrection.]

13. Concluding benediction.—*The God of hope*: the God who gives hope to both Jews and Gentiles.—*Joy and peace*: placed together as in xiv. 17.—*In believing*: Joy and peace are founded in faith.—*That ye may abound in hope*: Joy and peace are represented as the hypotheses of hope.

#### xv. 14—32.

An apology for the over-bold language of the Epistle to the intelligent Romans, a protest against the impression that Paul might take upon himself to come to the Romans as a teacher (while, on the contrary, he only intends to pass through Rome on his journey),

and a request that the readers will assist him with their prayers. —The preceding section, vv. 1—13, is in the form of a supplement to the ideas which had been already developed in the Epistle. The section which now follows is devoted to the further task of removing all possible cause of offence to Jewish-Christian readers from the contents of the letter and the impending journey.

## xv. 14—16.

Read, "But I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also yourselves are full of excellence, filled with all knowledge, since ye are able [lit. "being able"] (yourselves) also to exhort one another. But I have, in part, written somewhat too boldly to you, with the intention of reminding you again, for the sake of the grace which has been given to me by God that I should be a priest of Christ Jesus among [lit. "unto"] the Gentiles, to offer in sacrifice the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit."

14. Paul knows, as well as any one else, that the Romans "themselves," i.e. without his assistance, are "full of excellence," i.e., as is added immediately, "filled with all knowledge," in full possession of the whole Christian knowledge, "since ye are able yourselves to exhort one another;" so that, strictly speaking, the exhortations which the apostle has addressed to them, and especially the final wish expressed in ver. 13, must be superfluous to readers such as they are. In i. 8, the thanksgiving of Paul for the faith of the Romans, "which is spoken of throughout the whole world," refers only to the simple fact that they are Christians, which did not hinder the apostle from a desire to give them a deeper knowledge of the gospel (i. 11, 13).—The words of vv. 14 sqq., 22 sqq., have reference, not simply to the introduction to the Epistle, but also to 2 Cor. x. 10—18.

15. "I have, in part, written to you somewhat too boldly : " Notwithstanding this complete knowledge on the part of the Romans, Paul has still written the foregoing letter, and, "in part, too boldly." But the purpose of this too bold appearance is stated to be, "to remind" the Romans "again," i.e. not so much to say anything new to them, as to recall to their memory what they already know. Comp. 2 Cor. x. 10 sqq., where Paul like-



wise meets the reproach brought against him of an unbecoming tone in his letters, but it is not without irony that he there remarks that he is very far from venturing to compare himself with his opponents.—“For the sake of the grace that has been given to me by God:” i.e. to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. This gives the reason why Paul has, after all, ventured to remind the Romans again. Immediately afterwards, however, follows the statement, based on the principles by which Paul is guided in his calling, that he only intends to pay a passing visit to Rome.

16. The grace given to Paul is more closely defined. “That I should be a priest of Christ Jesus among [“unto”] the Gentiles.” The grace given to Paul is not here, as in i. 5, the apostolic office conferred upon him, but the calling of a sacrificial priest (*liturgus*). This is the expression afterwards commonly used for the bishops and overseers of the Church, appointed by the apostles. The word is not found elsewhere in Paul’s writings, except in Rom. xiii. 6, where it is used of the Gentile authorities. Here however, the preaching of the gospel is regarded as a sacrificial service, and the Gentiles converted by this preaching as the sacrificial gifts.—“To offer in sacrifice,” i.e. to administer as a priest.—“In order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable” (to God, or rather to Christ): This is the object which Paul has to follow after in the exercise of his priestly office.—“Sanctified by the Holy Spirit:” The communication of the Holy Spirit is represented as the consecration of the offering.

#### xv. 17—22.

These verses contain a defence of the apostle’s missionary labours among the Gentiles, united with the assurance that, true to his principle of not building on foundations which others have laid, he claims no apostolic authority over communities which he has not founded, and for this reason has been prevented hitherto from coming to Rome.

17. Read, “I have therefore boasting in Christ Jesus before God.” The rank of a priest of Christ among the Gentiles, granted to the apostle in ver. 16, of course gives him a right to boast in communion with Christ before God. The words refer to iv. 2, but are evidently intended to rebut a charge of vain self-glorification, which had been brought against Paul. There is nothing

more about this indeed in the context, but there is in the passage in 2 Cor. x. 12 sqq., which was evidently in the writer's mind at the time.

18. I claim no honour which does not belong to me, but to others. I boast only of that which Christ has actually done through me among the Gentiles. The expression again reminds us of 2 Cor. x. 12.—*By word and deed*, i.e. by preaching and by miracle. In 2 Cor. x. 11, again, the "word and deed" of the apostle are spoken of. There, however, they are opposed to one another, the one referring to his letters, the other to his personal activity.

19. Read, "By the power of signs and] wonders:" These are evidences of what Christ has wrought through him. In 2 Cor. xii. 12, again, Paul appeals to the signs and wonders performed by him as proofs of his apostolic authority.—*By the power of the Spirit of God*: according to another reading, "the Holy Spirit," or "the Spirit" without any addition. This power evinces itself in his work (or in wonders), as well as in his word.—*So that from Jerusalem and round about, &c.*: Here the results of Paul's priestly labours are described, and it is assumed that his missionary activity began in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood and extended as far as Illyricum. According to Gal. i. 18—24, Paul did not begin his preaching in Jerusalem or in Jewish territory; but according to the later view, Jerusalem was taken to be the starting-point of the Gentile mission (see Luke xxiv. 47 sq.; Acts i. 8), and the Paul of Acts says that at first he preached not only in Damascus, but also "in Jerusalem and all Judæa" (Acts xxvi. 20)—*Unto Illyricum*: more accurately, "as far as Illyricum." There is no further information, in the history of the apostle, of any missionary journey of Paul to Illyricum, or even to the borders of Illyria. Tit. iii. 12 must not be taken as evidence; for even supposing that the Nicopolis mentioned there, in which Paul is said to have intended to pass the winter, be the city of that name in Epirus on the Adriatic Sea, the epistle itself is not authentic, and its statements must not be introduced into the apostle's authentic history. Here Illyricum is introduced simply in confirmation of the idea that Paul preached the gospel, or, as the writer emphatically says, "fulfilled" the preaching of the gospel, to the extreme border of the Eastern and Western lands. Illyricum, then, is repre-



sented as the extreme border-land towards the West, in order to show that Paul has "no more room in these climes" (ver. 23), i.e. in the East, and therefore intends now to migrate to the West.—*I have fully preached, &c.*: lit. "I have fulfilled (i.e. completed the preaching of) the gospel of the Christ" (so that there is nothing more to do there). Luther correctly gives the meaning, in the words, "I have filled everything with the gospel of Christ." But how could Paul speak thus, when, after all, the number of the converted was infinitesimally small compared with the multitudes of the Gentile populations?

20, 21. A closer definition of the principles which regulated Paul's missionary labours, which in the first instance brings what has just been said within narrower limits, but at the same time prepares for what follows (vv. 22 sqq.). Only into those places did Paul abstain from carrying his preaching where others had already laboured before him, in accordance with his general principle of not building upon another man's foundation.—Read, "Thus, however, do I exert myself (properly, I make it a point of honour; see 2 Cor. v. 9) to preach the gospel not where Christ's name has already been named," i.e. where others have already preached before me. That Rome is especially intended here is plain from what follows. Rome and all Italy are regarded as foreign ground, because the communities there have been founded by others. Whether on that account they were already regarded as an *apostolic* foundation, as the later legend of Peter represented, must remain undecided.—*Lest I should build upon another man's foundation*: What is meant is, of course, not that Paul considered it beneath his dignity to do more than lay the foundation, but that he did not wish to trespass upon another man's ground, especially upon the Jewish-Christian mission fields. The principle as thus made absolute cannot be regarded as the apostle's. In the passage, 2 Cor. x. 15, which is evidently in the writer's mind, the apostle is only speaking of the interference of those who endeavour to make the communities of others rebel against them. Besides, if Paul had really adhered to this principle in regard to the Romans, he ought never to have written an epistle for their instruction.—*But as it is written*: Is. lii. 15. The words refer originally to the future conversion of the Gentiles generally. Here they are employed, not only to explain the

apostle's previous experience, but also to prepare the way for what is afterwards said about his further plans. Compare, again, 2 Cor. x. 16, where Paul, in a very similar connection, expresses his intention, as soon as the community at Corinth is sufficiently established in the faith, of carrying the gospel to the communities that lie beyond Corinth and Achaia (to the West).

22. *For which cause also*: This principle of mine, not to work in another man's field, has been the cause why I have been "many times" (lit. "the many times," i.e. on the many occasions referred to in i. 13) *hindered from coming to you*: viz. because Rome was a mission field that did not belong to the apostle. It is for the same reason that the Epistle to the Romans is represented as "in part too bold" (ver. 15), and the intention is assigned to the apostle of simply reminding the Romans of what they already know. And for the same reason, again, as is shown by what follows, Paul must not come to Rome for the purpose of preaching the gospel there, but only pays a passing visit to the imperial capital, while the goal of his journey is in Spain (ver. 24); and this although, in i. 10, Rome is represented as the final goal of all his missionary labours, and, 2 Cor. x. 16, probably Rome is especially intended.

xv. 23, 24.

[The proposed journey into Spain.]

But now, since I have no more room in the East, I will visit you on my journey to my new destination (Spain), and so satisfy the longing which I have had for many years to see you.—"But now, since I have no more room (see note on ver. 19) in these parts (lit. in these climes, i.e. in the East), but have a great desire these many years to come unto you" (see i. 11).—*Whensoever I take my journey into Spain*: Nowhere else, either in his Epistles or in the Book of Acts, do we find any mention of Paul's intention to travel to Spain. Certainly, if he had any such intention, it was never carried out. The mention of Spain, which was regarded by the ancients as the end of the world, is here connected with the idea that the Apostle to the Gentiles must have carried the gospel to the furthest extremity of the earth.—*I will come to you*: These words are wanting in the best MSS., but correctly complete the unfinished sentence.—*For I trust to see you on my journey*: lit. "For I trust to look at you, as I pass



through on my journey." The words are chosen so as to exclude any suspicion that Paul may perhaps wish to appear in Rome as a teacher, in virtue of his apostolic office. Paul is only going to pass through, only wants just to see the Romans, only wishes them to forward him on his journey. He wishes to be a recipient, not a giver. This is quite different from i. 13 sqq. The words remind us again of 1 Cor. xvi. 6, and 2 Cor. i. 16; but in both these passages the meaning is, that Paul desires to see the communities he has founded as often as possible, even if it be only on a passing visit.—*And to be brought on my way thitherward by you*: either by their prayers, or, literally, personally accompanied by some of them. The latter was afterwards customary when bishops were travelling.—*If first, &c.*: lit. "if I have first been (at least) partially filled with you." There is nothing here about a "spiritual gift" (i. 11) which Paul intends to bring to the Romans.

xv. 25—29.

Announcement of the apostle's journey to Jerusalem in order to hand over the collection made in Macedonia and Achaia. Comp. 2 Cor. viii. ix.

25. *But now I go unto Jerusalem* (before I begin my journey into Spain) *to minister unto the saints*, i.e. to bring them the loving gift (comp. 2 Cor. ix. 1).

26. *Them of Macedonia and Achaia*: lit. "Macedonia and Achaia," i.e. the communities there. The Galatians had also contributed (1 Cor. xvi. 1), but they are not mentioned in 2 Cor. viii. ix., any more than here.—*For the poor saints*: lit. "for the poor among the saints."

27. The collection which, according to 1 Cor. viii. ix., was a sign of the conciliatory disposition of the apostle towards the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem, is here represented as the discharge of a debt of gratitude, and even as a thank-offering for the "spiritual gifts" which the Gentile Christians had received from the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem. By these spiritual gifts we can only understand the communication of the gospel, so that the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem stand to the Gentile Christians in the relation of teachers to disciples. The principle itself reminds us of 1 Cor. ix. 1 sqq. There, however, Paul is defending his own right to be supported by the Corinthians, on the ground

that he has given them spiritual gifts. In 2 Cor. viii. 14, again, he speaks of a spiritual good which the Corinthians shall receive from Jerusalem, but it is as a spiritual return for their abundant alms, and consists not in an increase of the knowledge given to the Corinthians, but in the prayers offered for them in thanksgiving for the benefit received.—*Their duty is also, &c.*, should be “it is due [with direct reference to, *their debtors they are*] that they also should bring a sacrifice to them in the things which pertain to the body.”

28. *And have sealed to them this fruit*: i.e. when I have delivered to the saints in Jerusalem this harvest of the spiritual seed they have sown, consisting of this contribution of alms.—*I will come* (lit. “depart”) *by you into Spain*: Another indication that Paul is only coming to Rome on a passing visit.

29. Read, “In the fulness of the blessing of Christ.” *Of the gospel* should be omitted. What is meant is not a blessing (i.e. a “spiritual gift”) which he hopes to bring to the Romans, but a blessing which he has obtained through the bringing of the alms to Jerusalem, and which he now brings with him from there to Rome, viz. the establishment of a brotherly relation between Jewish and Gentile Christians.

#### xv. 30—32.

Exhortation to make intercession for Paul that he may be saved from the unbelieving Jews, and that the alms which he is taking may be favourably received by the Christians in Jerusalem.

30. *Beseech*: “exhort.”—“Through our Lord Jesus and through the love of the Spirit:” The Holy Spirit is regarded as the personal source of Christian brotherly love; and this, again, is shown especially in intercession.

31. Here a double apprehension is expressed, first that the apostle may be in danger from the unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem, secondly that the Christians in the same place may not receive his gift favourably. Both are certainly intelligible in the mouth of the apostle himself in his present circumstances, but the words may nevertheless have originated in the recollection of his actual experiences in Jerusalem.—*My service which I have for Jerusalem*, should be “my service in Jerusalem,” or rather, according to another reading, “the offering of my gift in Jerusalem.”—*Accepted of*: “acceptable to.”



32. *By the will of God*: If the reading of the Vatican and some other MSS., "by the will of the Lord Jesus" is correct, Jesus is spoken of here as Lord of the external fortunes of those who are his, which never occurs elsewhere in Paul's writings. [Strictly speaking, the Vatican MS. is the only one, of any authority, that reads "The Lord Jesus." The others (that do not read "God") have either "Jesus Christ" or "Christ Jesus," but this of course makes no difference in regard to the point raised in this note].

33. Concluding benediction, such as usually stands at the end of an epistle. This is the second closing formula in this chapter (see note on ver. 13).—*The God of peace*: comp. 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

#### xvi. 1, 2.

Commendation of Phœbe. Nothing is known of her beyond what is said here.

1. *Our sister*: of course in a spiritual sense.—*Servant*, should be "deaconess:" What is meant is a permanent office in the community. The duties of the deaconesses, like those of the deacons, consisted in the care of the poor and the sick. The office is not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament except in the First Epistle to Timothy.—"The community at Cenchreæ," the eastern port of Corinth towards Asia.

2. *Succourer*: strictly "patroness," i. e. guardian or protector. The chief duty of a "patron" or "patroness" was the protection and care of strangers.

#### xvi. 3—16.

The list of salutations. [The word sometimes rendered *greet* and sometimes *salute* is the same throughout the chapter in the Greek.] Most of the persons here mentioned are otherwise unknown. Some names appear to belong to Ephesus rather than Rome. Some of the persons mentioned lived in the traditions of the community at Rome, but perhaps these very traditions may have originated in the mention of the names here.—A considerable proportion of the names are those of slaves. It is singular that we should find such a long list of acquaintances of the apostle in a community which, so far, he had never visited, and no less singular that such prominence should be given to names which imply Jewish descent.

3. *Priscilla*, should be “*Prisca*.”—Aquila and his wife *Prisca*, or *Priscilla*, as she is always called, had formerly been settled in Rome, but had fled to Corinth on the expulsion of the Jews by the emperor Claudius. Here Paul became acquainted with them, worked with Aquila, who was of the same trade with himself, and, as it seems, converted both husband and wife to the Messianic faith (Acts. xviii. 2). Afterwards we find them in Ephesus (Acts xviii. 18, 26), where they gathered a Christian community around them which met in their house. At the time when the First Epistle to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus, about ten months before the Epistle to the Romans, they were still there; and Paul sends their greetings to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xvi. 19). That they should both in the meantime have returned to Rome and there established another community in their house is scarcely likely. Even the Second Epistle to Timothy places them in Ephesus again (2 Tim. iv. 19).—*My helpers in Christ Jesus*: The Book of Acts (xviii. 26) also informs us of their activity as teachers.

4. *Laid down their own necks*: If these words are intended to be taken literally, they mean that Aquila and *Priscilla* rescued the apostle from danger at the risk of their own lives (2 Cor. i. 8 sqq.?).

5. *Epaenetus*: not otherwise known. He is described as “the first-fruits (among the Christians) of Asia” (so we must read, and not *Achaia*), i.e. the first converted by the apostle in the province of Asia, as Stephanas (1 Cor. xvi. 15) is called the first-fruits of Achaia. It would be more natural, especially when we consider the context, to look for this “first-fruits of Asia” also in Ephesus, the capital of the province of Asia, rather than in Rome.

6. *Mary*: otherwise unknown, as are also almost all who follow. The name indicates a Jewess. Perhaps she was the wife of *Epaenetus*.—*Who bestowed much labour on us*: Perhaps this refers to nursing in sickness. Instead of *us*, however, the best MSS. read “you,” so that the “labour” must have been bestowed upon the Christians in Rome.

7. *Andronicus*: a Greek slave name of frequent occurrence.—*Junia*: a Roman slave name. It is uncertain whether this is a man’s name (*Junias*) or a woman’s (*Junia*). If it be the latter, *Andronicus* and *Junia* may have been a third married couple.—



*My kinsmen*: As it is individuals who are spoken of here, and not (as in ix. 3) fellow-countrymen generally, it would seem that the phrase must be understood literally. It is reasonable, however, considering the frequent repetition of the same phrase (see vv. 11, 21), to understand it to refer to members of the same tribe with the apostle.—*My fellow-prisoners*: This expression looks as if the apostle was himself a prisoner at the time (comp. Col. iv. 10, Philem. 23); but this is inconsistent with the circumstances in which the Epistle was written. Paul was never detained as a prisoner for any length of time until considerably later in Cæsarea and Rome. This is commonly taken to refer to one of the temporary imprisonments mentioned in 2 Cor. vi. 5, xi. 23.—*Who are of note among the apostles*: i.e. not who are themselves apostles of note, but whom the apostles (i.e. the twelve) hold in high esteem.—*Who also were in Christ before me*: "Who also were before me in Christ." This may either refer to the two persons greeted or to the apostles. If it refer to the former, what is meant is, that they were Christians before Paul was; if to the latter, that they were apostles before Paul was. The construction of the sentence seems to favour the former interpretation; but in that case it is remarkable that the twelve should here be spoken of simply as "the apostles."

8. *Amplias*: according to another reading, "*Ampliatius*." The name, like most of those that follow, is a slave name.

10. *Of Aristobulus' household*: the Christian house slaves of a man of some position named Aristobulus. The name Aristobulus reminds us of the royal house of the Herods.

11. *Herodion my kinsman*: see note on ver. 7. The name Herodion suggests the freed-man of some prince of the house of Herod.—*That be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord*: If this Narcissus is meant for the well-known favourite of Claudius, the greeting to his Christian slaves here is strange, as Narcissus had been dead some years at the time when the Epistle to the Romans was written. There was also, however, a favourite of Nero named Narcissus, and the same name occurs again in an inscription in Aphrodisias in Caria.

12. *Tryphena and Tryphosa*: judging from the names, probably two sisters. The first name occurs also in the legend of St. Thecla as the name of a Cilician queen. We meet with a Tryphosa in

Caria. The addition, *who labour in the Lord*, seems to mark Tryphena and Tryphosa as deaconesses. The same remark is made about Persis, who is mentioned immediately afterwards. [Persis is also a woman's name.]

13. A *Rufus* is also mentioned in Mark xv. 21 as one known to the readers of the gospel, i.e. to the Romans for whom it was intended. In the legends of the apostles he appears as the companion of Peter. The name was tolerably common both in Rome and elsewhere.—*Chosen in the Lord*: We have no means of deciding whether this is anything more than a general title which might be given to any believer.—*And his mother and mine*: What is meant is, that the mother of this Rufus had also been like a mother to Paul. Nothing further is known of her.

14. Here five persons are greeted at once, *Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes*. The addition, *and the brethren which are with them*, seems to indicate that there were five distinct communities which gathered at the houses of the five persons mentioned. Some of the names appear elsewhere in Roman legends. The best known is Hermas, whom tradition regarded as a prophet. About the middle of the second century, a book entitled "The Shepherd" was written under his name, at Rome. This is still extant. The names Hermes and Hermas, however, have also been found in inscriptions in Asia Minor.

15. *Philologus and Julia*: probably husband and wife. In their house also, as in that of *Nereus and his sister* (whose name is not mentioned), and that of *Olympas* (Olympodorus), Christian communities seem to have met together. We find a Nereus mentioned in the Roman legend of Peter.

16. *Salute one another with an holy kiss*: exactly the same expression as in 1 Cor. xvi. 20, 2 Cor. xiii. 12. What is meant is the Christian kiss of brotherhood (see 1 Thess. v. 26, 1 Pet. v. 14).—*The churches, &c.*, should be "All the churches of Christ greet you." In 1 Cor. xvi. 20, 2 Cor. xiii. 13, the greeting is from "all the brethren," or "all the saints," i.e. in the place from which the apostle writes. Here the greeting is from all the Christian communities generally without further definition.

#### xvi. 17—20.

Warning against schisms in doctrine. As fresh greetings



follow again in ver 21, the insertion of this passage here is curious, and it is doubly remarkable that it should have in ver. 20 a distinct conclusion of its own.

17. The readers of the Epistle are exhorted to keep a sharp watch on those who cause divisions, and to avoid intercourse with them.—*Which cause divisions and offences*: What sort of divisions and offences these were, is not stated ; but it is assumed to be known. In any case the addition, *contrary to the doctrine which ye have learnt*, points to real doctrinal differences, so that we cannot suppose that it is simply the differences of opinion of ch. xiv. that are referred to here. Nor can we suppose that these false teachers are Jewish Christians, if the words are addressed to Rome, i.e. to a Jewish-Christian community, any more than that *the doctrine which ye have learned* is the Pauline gospel. Either of these suppositions would only have been possible if the words had been addressed to a Gentile Christian community on a Pauline foundation. The admonition to *avoid* the false teachers, i.e. to break off all fellowship with them (comp. 2 John 10, 2 Tim. iii. 5) applies better to those who, like the “Gnostics,” as they were called, rejected the common Christian tradition. The expression, *offences contrary to* (lit. “beyond”) *the doctrine which ye have learned*, also favours this supposition. The doctrine itself would then be, not the gospel of Paul, but the common Christian (catholic) faith as distinguished from Gnostic opinions (comp. 1 Tim. i. 3 sqq., 19, iv. 1, vi. 3, 13, 21 ; 2 Tim. i. 13, ii. 2 ; Tit. i. 4, 9 sq., ii. 1, &c.).

18. If this referred to Jewish-Christian opponents of the apostle (as 2 Cor. does), the reproach that they *serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly*, would mean, that they only appeared as teachers in order to derive a comfortable subsistence from the communities (comp. the very similar accusation in Phil. iii. 19). On the other hand, if these were Gnostics, the words would be a vivid description of their moral degeneracy, such as we meet with in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, and frequently elsewhere in later writings.—*Good words and fair speeches*: In the first case supposed above, this must refer to the eloquence with which the Jewish-Christian teachers extolled to the Gentile Christians the blessings of strict adherence to the Law ; in the latter case, to the *science* [gnosis] *falsely so called* (1 Tim. vi. 20)

of the Gnostics, and their *vain jangling* (1 Tim. i. 6, comp. Tit. i. 10, and see also Col. ii. 4).—*The hearts of the simple* (i.e. of the guileless and unsuspecting): The less the inexperienced suspect any evil under such fair-sounding speeches, the more easily are they ensnared.

19. This verse gives the reason for the warning just uttered. For of course every one knows of you that you have the right faith. Still I wished to admonish you to seek only after the true wisdom which leads to salvation and to beware of evil.—*For your obedience is come abroad* (i.e. has become known) *unto all men*: The words refer to i. 8, but here it is not meant that the existence of a Christian community at Rome is well known, but the firmness of the Romans in the true faith. The words bear witness, therefore, to the Roman community that so far it has been untouched by false teachers.—*I am glad therefore on your behalf*: more exactly, “over you therefore (i.e. in distinction from others) I rejoice.”—“But I will that ye be wise unto that which is good, but simple unto that which is evil:” an allusion to Matt. x. 16. The readers of the Epistle are to show wisdom in regard to that which is good, and so are to beware of false wisdom, but they are to be “simple” (properly, pure or unadulterated) in regard to evil, i.e. they are to preserve their unadulterated faith from all contamination.

20. Divisions are of Satan; but God, who is a God of peace, and therefore desires peace in the church and unity of doctrine, will shortly put Satan under your feet and bruise him (i.e. root out false doctrine). The words express not a wish but a promise. They also assume that the readers have to contend with false teachers, which is certainly somewhat surprising after ver. 19.—*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you*: the third concluding formula which we find in the appendix. [The *Amen* added here in A.V. is only found in a few of the later MSS.]

#### xvi. 21—24.

Greetings from Corinth.

21. *Timotheus* [Timothy], *my workfellow*: the well-known fellow-labourer of Paul.—*Lucius*: not otherwise known. Legend makes him the first bishop of Cenchreæ.—*Jason*: This was the name, according to Acts xvii. 5 sqq., of a Jewish Christian who



was Paul's host in Thessalonica. Perhaps he was one of the delegates of the Macedonian communities appointed to take the collection to Jerusalem (see 2 Cor. viii. 1, ix. 2—4), but he is not enumerated with the others in Acts xx. 4.—*Sosipater*: probably the delegate from Berea mentioned in the Book of Acts (Acts xx. 4). If, then, these verses originally belonged to the Epistle to the Romans, the greetings here are from the companions of Paul's journey. Since, however, some whose names are given in Acts xx. 4 are not mentioned here, these greetings are probably only from those among them who were acquainted with the Jewish Christians in Rome, and who were therefore very probably themselves of Jewish descent. In that case we must after all understand the words *my kinsmen* to be used here in the more comprehensive sense of fellow-countrymen.

22. The greeting of the scribe whom Paul employed to write the Epistle to the Romans. The name *Tertius* is Latin, So also is the *Quartus* of ver. 23. Perhaps both were Roman Jews who had been expelled from Rome with Aquila and converted by Paul in Corinth.

23. *Gaius mine host and of the whole church* ("community"): Paul's host in Corinth, probably the same whom the apostle had himself baptized (1 Cor. i. 14). Paul may very well have stayed at his house during his last residence in Corinth. The first time, according to Acts xviii. 7, he stayed with Titius Justus. Gaius is probably called the host of the whole community because the community at that time met in his house.—*Erastus the chamberlain of the city*: the receiver of the city revenues, who as the most important citizen connected with the community sends a special greeting. He must be carefully distinguished from the assistant of the apostle in his missionary labours who is mentioned in Acts xix. 22 (see also 2 Tim. iv. 20).

24. Fourth conclusion. Most of the MSS. which give the conclusion at the end of ver. 20 omit it here. It is, however, probably original in both places. If it had been added later, it would most likely have come after ver. 27.

#### xvi. 25—27.

Ascription of praise to God, or "doxology."

In some MSS. these verses appear at the conclusion of ch. xiv.

In the Alexandrian MS. they appear in both places. In others, again, they are omitted entirely. Elsewhere in the genuine Epistles of Paul we find such forms of praise (see Gal. i. 5; 2 Cor. xi. 31; Rom. i. 25, ix. 5, xi. 36), but they are for the most part much shorter. On the other hand, we may compare with this one Eph. iii. 20 sq.; 1 Tim. i. 17; Jude 24 sq.

25. *Of power to stablish you*, refers to Rom. i. 11.—*According to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ*: in the faith proclaimed by me and in the preaching of Jesus Christ. The words *my gospel* are not used here in the well-known sense in which we find the gospel of Paul spoken of elsewhere, viz. in the sense of the peculiar Pauline conception of the gospel, so that it should here mean that the readers should be confirmed in this, in distinction from the Jewish-Christian doctrine. What is here meant is the common Christian faith generally, and the phrase *my gospel* is synonymous with *the preaching of Jesus Christ* as delivered in all the communities. This latter seems from what follows to be not so much the proclamation concerning Jesus Christ, as Christ's own preaching.—*According to the revelation, &c.*, should be "according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for eternal ages." Both the thought and the expression remind us in a striking manner of similar phrases in the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, the Ephesians and the Colossians (see 1 Tim. i. 11; Col. i. 26; Eph. iii. 3, 4, 5, 9, 10). The word of Christ himself is taken to be the revelation of a mystery that has been concealed from eternity. It does not consist, however (as in Rom. i. 17, iii. 21), in the disclosure of the "righteousness of God," or (Rom. xi. 25) of the divine order of salvation according to which this righteousness is to be realized, but rather in the disclosure of the mystery of the supernatural world by the divine person of Christ manifested upon earth. Of course the calling of the Gentiles into the church of Christ belongs to this same mystery.

26. *But now is made manifest*: The revelation in the present is opposed, not to the past, but to the eternity which was before time began. It takes place in such a way that the understanding of the mystery which hitherto failed is now, *by the scriptures of the prophets* (lit. "by means of prophetic writings"), *according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known*: Since the



mystery had hitherto been concealed, even in the times of the prophets, what is here meant can only be a deeper meaning which had been put into the prophetic writings by the Spirit of God, and was now first disclosed. God, however, is called "the eternal" with special reference to that eternity which has no beginning, during which the mystery was hidden in silence, until God commanded to disclose it, viz. by the sending of Christ. This mystery is made known, however, *to all nations for the obedience of faith*, i.e. in order to establish the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles; an expression which points to passages such as Rom. i. 5 (comp. i. 17, iii. 21, xi. 25), but which describes not the substance of the mystery itself, but the result which God purposed should follow from its revelation.

27. Read, "To God, who alone is wise, through Jesus Christ, be glory for ever. Amen:" comp. 1 Tim. i. 17; Jude 24 sq.; John xvii. 3. God is spoken of emphatically as the only wise, in contrast to false sources from which it is sought to derive wisdom. The addition *through Jesus Christ* indicates that this wisdom of God is only revealed in Jesus Christ, and through him.

#### *The Subscription.*

The subscription, *Written to the Romans from Corinth, and sent by Phœbe, servant of the church at Cenchrea* (Cenchreæ), like all other such subscriptions, does not belong to the Epistle itself, but is from the hand of a later copyist.

#### *The Authenticity of the two last Chapters.*

The objections to the genuineness of ch. xv. xvi. mentioned on p. 40, will have been justified by what has been said in the notes on different points in detail. In the oldest collection of the Pauline Epistles, made by Marcion (about 140 A.D.), the two chapters were entirely, or almost entirely, wanting. The latest researches, however, have not yet led to a final settlement of the question. The different sections are not all equally suspicious. The four-fold conclusion (xv. 13, 33, xvi. 20, 24) and the arrangement of material, which is in other respects also so remarkable, seem to point to the use of various ancient pieces which have been worked up together. The section xvi. 1—16, 20, is probably a fragment of a genuine Epistle of the apostle to the Ephesians,

and, according to some scholars, vv. 17—19 are also addressed to Ephesus. Suspicion is raised, however, by the warning against false teachers (see notes on vv. 17—19), and also by some details in the earlier verses (see note on xvi. 1). On the other hand, vv. 21—24 appear to have formed the genuine conclusion of the Epistle to the Romans. It is possible that genuine portions of the original Epistle have been worked up in the beginning of ch. xv. in the information about the apostle's plans for his journeys (especially from ver. 25 onwards), and in the exhortation to make intercession for him (vv. 30—33). In its present form, however, the appendix probably dates from the post-apostolic age.



## THE EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS.

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### PAUL'S PREACHING IN CORINTH.

IN the year 53 A.D., Paul had come from Macedonia, where he had founded a number of Christian communities, to Corinth, the luxurious Greek commercial city, at that time the capital of the Roman province of Achaia. After he had found shelter and work in the house of one who was at the same time a fellow-workman and a fellow-believer, the tent-maker Aquila, who had been expelled from Rome shortly before, the next thing was to make trial here also of his preaching of the Cross. The soil appeared anything but favourable, and indeed it required all the power of faith even of a Paul to keep him from being frightened away from the work by the difficulties which appeared at the very first glance. He himself indicates them most concisely in the words, "The Jews require signs, and the Greeks inquire after wisdom" (1 Cor. i. 22). The bearer of the new doctrine, one of that Jewish race which was regarded by the Gentiles with disgust and hatred, a man too of unattractive appearance, and deficient in fluency of speech because he had always to wrestle so hard with the thoughts which streamed in such abundance into him (2 Cor. x. 10), was by no means suited to the taste of the Hellenes, who were accustomed to beauty of expression, to all the ornaments of rhetoric, and to the brilliancy of their own philosophical systems. Still more distasteful was the doctrine itself, faith in a crucified Jew. And the gravity of repentance and the impending judgment, which was so deeply stamped upon the

new religion, was in striking contrast to the character of the Greek people, given up to the outward show of finite things, and was especially opposed to that frivolity of the Corinthians which had become a byword even in the Gentile world.

Moreover, from the numerous Jewish population in Corinth he could hardly expect anything better than what he had experienced at the hands of his own countrymen in every city in which he had hitherto laboured. "The Jews require signs." The message, indeed, which Paul brought of the Messiah risen from the dead and returning from heaven in glory and victory, and the hope, which he connected with this, of a Messianic kingdom, coming in with the sound of trumpets and accompanied by great signs, in which all the hostile powers of the world should be made subject to God (1 Cor. xv. 24—28, 52), contained nothing so far that presented any difficulty to the Jewish mind, with its craving for the marvellous. If only there had not been the offence of the cross! A suffering Messiah, a Messiah dying upon the cross, was a *fact* which wounded the Jewish mind deeply, and which it was scarcely possible for any mere hope to counterbalance. If only the position of the chosen people had been assured to the Jews in the promised kingdom! But Paul denied every Jewish privilege in the new kingdom of God with inexorable decision, and taught that the Gentiles were to be placed upon exactly the same footing with the Jews.

And yet, after all, Christianity contained so much which met the wants of the time, and not only of the Jews. The old world was in a state of complete dissolution. The belief in the old gods had long been tottering to its fall. The inscription which Paul, according to the Book of Acts, read upon an altar in Athens, "To the Unknown God," indicates one trait of the dissatisfaction and yearning that permeated the age. What Paul could write subsequently to his Christian converts at Corinth, "We know that an idol is nothing in the world" (1 Cor. viii. 4), was already true of innumerable Gentiles; and when he added,



“and that there is none other God but one,” there were innumerable Gentiles who in this also were in agreement with him. Hence that wide-spread impatient search for new foundations of faith so characteristic of the age, which, where it found no bread, was oftentimes forced to put up with stones, and which sought by all manner of strange and mysterious religions to satisfy the thirst for the infinite. Hence the frequent tendency to Judaism mentioned by the writers of the age with astonishment. In every city there were not a few who took part in the Jewish religious services without formally being received within the pale of the Jewish religious communion. They were known as the proselytes of the gate. To these especially the doctrine of Paul seemed to offer all that they required—the purer theistic belief of Mosaism, but free from all the ceremonial of the Law, which struck the Gentiles as so burdensome and often so ridiculous, free also from so many narrow and materialistic views which clung to Judaism.

In other respects also what Paul preached accorded, in many ways, with the tendencies of the age. The sense of the sinfulness and worthlessness of life, the perception that man is nothing and can do nothing of himself, but requires grace, are found in Gentile writers of the age as well as in the writings of the Christians. And in addition to this horror at itself, the whole generation seemed to experience from time to time a fear of some dark fortune and heavy judgment threatened by the unhappy state of the Roman empire. The horrors of the imperial throne, the terrors of international and civil wars, more than once made it seem that the last day of the Roman empire was come. When Paul painted in vivid colours to Jew and Gentile alike their universal sinfulness (Rom. i. ii.), when he depicted the threatening judgment that was already at the door, when he proclaimed the wrath of God against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, when he placed the approaching destruction of this world

in full view, and delighted to direct men's minds to the end of all things, he might be sure of finding eager ears, and hearts thoroughly prepared for his words.

And while even the nobler and better minds of that age were oppressed by hopelessness or scepticism, the Christians looked hopefully and joyfully to the future, looked for a new spring-time of the world, a refreshing and renewal of all things. A Paul could point the despairing generation beyond the ruins of the ancient world to a new kingdom of God, and inflame the hearts of men for it by the example of his own glowing enthusiasm. He gave to the world again an ideal in which it was possible for men to believe, and which they could make the goal of their exertions. And it was no disadvantage to this new world of faith, but rather an assistance to it in its victory in a materialistic generation, that it appeared before the imagination with many fanatical additions and in many respects in very sensuous colours. How the poor, the slaves, the women, all the oppressed in that age, felt themselves drawn and lifted up when the hope was placed before them that in a few years they should judge the world, and even the angels! (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3).

Then, again, Paul's teaching was by no means so exclusively practical and didactic, or so devoid of thought, that the "wisdom after which *the Greeks* sought" could have no place in it. He himself knows that he also brings wisdom, viz. the wisdom of them that are enlightened and perfect (1 Cor. ii. 6). He knows that he is in possession of weapons with which he is able to destroy strongholds and every height that will oppose the knowledge of God (2 Cor. x. 4, 5). What he proclaimed was as good wisdom (philosophy), of its own kind, as the investigations of a Plato had been. It was a necessity of his own mental constitution that he should go clearly and logically to the bottom of everything, and investigate the principles of all the phenomena of life. This necessity of his nature compelled him to meditate upon and investigate the ways of God, the eternal counsel, hidden



from the world, which had been revealed in the manifestation of Jesus, freedom and election by grace, faith and works, law and gospel, the development of humanity, the higher nature of Jesus, the world beyond and to come. And when he presented all these thoughts to his hearers as the new wisdom of the Christian world, truly he gave the Greeks matter enough for speculation and disputation, and abundant room for the exercise of rhetorical art.

And even the Jew found some difficulty in entirely closing his ears to Paul's preaching. Paul's materials were indeed prevailingly Jewish: the Messiah and the Messianic kingdom, righteousness before God, death as a punishment for sin, the atoning sacrifice for the guilt of the world, the resurrection of the dead, &c. Paul and the other apostles had themselves been Jews, but they had overcome the offence of the cross, being convinced from passages in the Old Testament that Christ had died for our sins, and had been raised again for the sake of our righteousness (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4), and of this they had obtained complete certainty through the appearances of Jesus to them after his death (1 Cor. xv. 5—8). It was only necessary to be convinced by the passages in the Old Testament upon which the Christians, following the exegetical methods in vogue among the Jews, rested their faith, it was only necessary to credit the statements of Paul, Peter, and James, the twelve, and the five hundred brethren, who were convinced that they had seen Jesus after his death.

We find, then, that Paul during a stay of a year and a half in Corinth succeeded in gathering together a considerable Christian community, consisting partly of Jews, but mainly of Gentiles. A proselyte of the gate, *Titius Justus* by name, offered his house, which was close by the synagogue, to Paul for the delivery of his discourses, and to the little community as a meeting-place. Even the ruler of the synagogue, *Crispus*, joined them, and Paul, delighted with this important result of his labours, departed from his usual custom and himself baptized him (1 Cor. i. 14). He also baptized a certain *Caius*, who was a householder (Rom.

xvi. 23). A Greek woman named *Chloe* (1 Cor. i. 11) allowed her servants to attend the discourses of Paul and his two companions Silas and Timotheus, and to enrol themselves as members of the community. On the whole, according to Paul's own statement (1 Cor. i. 26 sqq.), it was mainly people of the lower and even of the lowest ranks who gave ear to the new message, artizans, slaves, and women. It was necessarily among these oppressed and despised classes that the first acceptance was obtained for a doctrine which proclaimed the equality of all before God without distinction of rank (Gal. iii. 28), which was permeated by a sense of the high value of every single human soul in the sight of God, and the duty of man to reverence man, which revealed the Deity as merciful love and declared brotherly love to be the supreme law of life, and which finally brought into prospect a state of the world in which the pressure and anxiety of the finite should be shaken off. And the messengers of the gospel were not ashamed to condescend to those who were most utterly despised and rejected, and to seek that which was lost. Paul, looking at the various elements contained in the young community, could write, "Be not deceived ; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you" (1 Cor. vi. 9—12).

#### THE OCCASION OF OUR FIRST EPISTLE.

Paul looked with especial pleasure on the community which he had founded in Corinth. Here his gospel to the Gentiles, which met with so much resistance, had again obtained a great victory. A Christian community in such a place was of the utmost importance in its bearing upon the question of his whole work. He calls it an Epistle of Christ, understood and read of all men (2 Cor. iii. 2). After he had made all arrangements for their permanance and further growth, he looked around for a



wider field of labour. Information from Ephesus justified the supposition that a great door was opened to him there (1 Cor. xvi. 9). Towards the end of the year 55 he removed to that city.

Only too soon did the Corinthian community miss the strong and skilful hand of its founder. Troubles and disorders of various kinds made themselves felt among its members. Many fell away again into their old heathen customs (1 Cor. v. 11; 2 Cor. xii. 20, 21). Paul hastened back from Ephesus. He admonished and threatened, and held out the prospect of severe measures if those who were to blame did not improve. In deep grief he departed again from the community (2 Cor. xii. 21), and, either while on his journey back or after arriving again at Ephesus, he despatched an Epistle to them in which he seriously reprimanded them (1 Cor. v. 11). Unfortunately this first Epistle to the Corinthians is no longer extant, and its loss has given rise to many obscurities, in which the two Epistles that followed it, which are the only ones handed down to us, are still involved.

Meanwhile the community rapidly increased in numbers, and the new elements introduced brought with them new life and also new complications. The place which Paul formerly filled had now been taken by *Apollos*, a Jew of Alexandria by birth. As a Christian, he was of Paul's own way of thinking. He had probably belonged to that Alexandrian school which formed for itself a strange combination of Judaism and Greek philosophy. He is described as an eloquent man, and mighty in the exposition of the Scriptures (Acts xviii. 24). The manner in which he carried forward Paul's work, the rhetorical brilliancy which he added to the Christian faith, his connection of the new religion with learned speculations, afforded to many the much desired opportunity of making the new faith a subject for the exercise of their powers of debate and rhetorical display. They forgot, what Paul had so strongly insisted upon, that Christ was made unto us by God not only wisdom, but, above all, righteousness and sanctification and redemption (1 Cor. i. 30). The doctrine

of the Cross, which Paul had made the central point of Christianity, appeared to them poor and mean compared with the "persuasive words of man's wisdom" (1 Cor. ii. 4). They began to speak contemptuously of Paul, and to rank the skilful rhetorician Apollos high above him. At the same time, the Jewish-Christian party, which rejected the Gentile gospel of Paul and denied him the name of Apostle, looked up more and more boldly every day, enjoying as it did the support of the Jewish-Christian emissaries who had come from Jerusalem to Corinth. These inscribed the name of Cephas, or Peter, on their banner. Others again made even the name of Christ a party name, and said, "We are of Christ." Thus the community was split up into parties, each of which attempted, amid jealousy and wrangling, to exalt itself and its leaders as much as possible (1 Cor. i.—iv.).

To these religious divisions were added moral perversities, some of them of the coarsest kind, and all manner of disturbances of Christian morals and soberness. The shameless transgressions of the ten commandments which Paul had censured in his first (lost) epistle, went on as freely as ever, and recently a case had occurred which was almost unknown even to heathenism itself: a son had taken his father's wife, his own stepmother, in marriage, and actually while the father himself was still living (1 Cor. v.). Another evil was, that Christians proceeded against Christians before a heathen judge—Christians, to whom the promise had been given that they should judge the world (1 Cor. vi. 1—8). Again, while some said that to Christians all things were permitted, and, appealing to the liberty which they enjoyed in the full consciousness of being Christians, gave themselves up to unrestricted unchastity, others with exaggerated spirituality protested even against marriage as a carnal connection prejudicial to the holiness of the Christian (1 Cor. vi. 12, vii.). The heathen customs and heathen worship, by which the community was surrounded, also involved it in many temptations. The flesh of animals offered in the temples of the heathen deities, so far as it was not used in the temple services, was sold in the



market, or some of it was carried home by those who had taken part in the celebration. Some Christians ate this, and even bought it for themselves without scruple. Others made it a point of conscience not to do so, fearing that they might thereby be brought into the power of "the evil spirits." And the more enlightened offended—sometimes, it would seem, purposely offended—the scrupulous (1 Cor. viii. ix.). Many Christians would not be persuaded to cease from taking part in the heathen worship itself and the festivities connected with it. Every festival, whether of a family or of a corporate body, was connected among the Gentiles with a religious celebration in the temple. If the Christian was invited by friends or relations, was he always to excuse himself? The idol is nothing, said some; what harm does it do us, who have this knowledge, to take part in the feast? Others, again, regarded it as an intolerable inconsistency to pass from heathen feasts to the Christian supper, to "hasten from the table of devils to the table of the Lord" (1 Cor. x.).

But even in the Christian worship itself everything was not always orderly and decent. Christian women were beginning to lay aside the veil, the ancient symbol of humble retirement and subjection, when they appeared in the meeting-house at prayer (1 Cor. xi. 1—16). And actually the social love-feast itself, to which the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper proper, was attached, had degenerated into a mere carousal. The contribution which each one had to bring to the common meal was consumed by the one who brought it; there was feasting and drinking, and the poor had to be content to look on (1 Cor. xi. 17 sqq.).

Especially did the rivalry as to the comparative values of different spiritual gifts cause great disorder at the religious meetings. The "speaking with tongues," which was regarded as a special manifestation of the Holy Spirit, although it bore the greatest resemblance to the heathen mantic, or the drunken speeches and gestures of fanatical priests, alternately astonished and wearied the congregation, inasmuch as no hearer understood

a word of what was said. It sometimes happened that a voluble preacher would not stop speaking, while another, believing that he also was under the influence of the Spirit, could not wait, so that often two, or even three, were speaking at once. Even women were carried away by the universal enthusiasm, and appeared as speakers (1 Cor. xii.—xiv.). And, finally, even the fundamental doctrines of Paul's preaching of Christianity were attacked. Some disputed the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. Others raised doubtful questions as to its precise nature, and the manner in which it took place (1 Cor. xv.).

#### THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

In the year 57 or 58 A.D., the state of things at Corinth being such as has been described above, the community replied to the Apostle's letter, and at the same time laid before him a series of disputed and complicated questions for his decision (1 Cor. vii. 1). The letter was sent to him by some of the household of Chloe, who also endeavoured to give him orally a complete picture of the state of things at Corinth. Meanwhile, Apollos had also removed from Corinth to Ephesus (1 Cor. xvi. 12), apparently not being permanently satisfied with the state of things in the former city. He also will not have failed to give information on various points connected with the community at Corinth.

At the time it was impossible for Paul to leave Ephesus, where his gospel had given rise to violent and stormy disputes, but he had here material and occasion sufficient before him, and he proceeded in a second epistle to set his opinion before the community, and endeavour to arrest the destruction of its ecclesiastical institutions. This is our *First Epistle to the Corinthians*. In it Paul deals in succession with the various matters enumerated above; then he requires the community to make a collection for the poor Christians in Jerusalem; and then he holds out the prospect of his impending arrival, and a lengthened stay



amongst them. This Epistle was written shortly before Easter, A.D. 58.

#### THE OCCASION OF OUR SECOND EPISTLE.

Paul intended to remain at Ephesus till Pentecost [Whitsuntide]—so he had written to the Corinthians at the end of his Epistle—then he meant to come to them by way of Macedonia, and if possible spend the winter with them (1 Cor. xvi. 5—8). And we actually find the Apostle in the summer of the same year travelling through Troas on his way to Macedonia (2 Cor. ii. 12). But he had determined not to enter Corinth until the community was again restored to obedience, and the news from it was more satisfactory. He would not come to them a second time in sorrow (2 Cor. ii. 1). He therefore sent on his friend and fellow-labourer Titus in advance, that he might work upon the community through him, and wait for the account which he would bring back. While still in Troas, where he laboured for some time after leaving Ephesus, and with most encouraging results, Paul had expected his assistant to return to him (2 Cor. ii. 12 sq.); but in vain. He was much troubled by the non-appearance of Titus. Should he really have to give up the community to which he was so passionately attached? Could it be that his letter had still further estranged them from him? He cannot bear to wait any longer in Troas, and he hastens to cross the sea into Macedonia (2 Cor. ii. 12, 13). There at last he meets his beloved Titus. The accounts which he brings with him from Corinth are on the whole very satisfactory. The majority had manifested sincere repentance, a genuine longing to see Paul, and great zeal for him (2 Cor. vii. 7). Of the abuses and misconduct which our First Epistle had had to rebuke, little more was now heard, although from a moral point of view much was still to be desired. Especially the scandal of the unnatural son before mentioned was wiped out. The guilty man repented of his transgression so deeply that he was almost in despair, and

required comfort rather than punishment (2 Cor. ii. 7). Paul therefore did not insist upon the severe steps he had enjoined in his other Epistle (1 Cor. v. 3—5), but approved the milder penalty which had been decreed against the sinner by the decision of the majority (2 Cor. ii. 8—10).

But the Epistle was very far from having produced such healthy results in every case. A defiant opposition which would not be corrected, and yet was rendered influential by many circumstances, and which he had had to contend with in his Epistle, as the Petrine party and the Christ party, not only continued to exist, but had sharpened its weapons against him, and under new leaders had gained increased confidence and courage. These leaders had not sprung from the community itself; they were those itinerant Jewish-Christian preachers who made their way everywhere into the communities founded by the Apostle to the Gentiles. They carry their introductions in their pockets—and whom are their introductions from but the heads of the Christian community in Jerusalem itself? (2 Cor. iii. 1). These are the men who “boast in another man’s line of things made ready to their hand,” who appropriate to themselves other men’s fields of labour, who “stretch themselves out” and reach beyond the boundaries that God has set for them (2 Cor. x. 13—17). They attack Paul with all the means that religious fanaticism supplies, and leave the community no peace. They represent everything about him as utterly worthless—his character, his doctrine, and his claim to the apostolic office. His letter to the community has only supplied them with new and sharp weapons against him in addition to the old ones. He had threatened the community that he would come with a rod and show them his apostolic power in the infliction of punishment. To those who were puffed up, thinking that he would not have the courage to come, he had announced that he was coming, and declared that he would match himself against them (1 Cor. iv. 18—20). He had demanded and set forth in definite form a miraculous punishment of the incestuous son (1 Cor. v. 3—5).



Now their contempt was unbounded. The empty babbler! He will terrify you by his letters from a safe distance, but he will never come (2 Cor. x. 9). His letters are impressive and powerful enough, but his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible. He boasts of his apostolic power—a fine sort of power that can destroy, but cannot build up! (2 Cor. x. 8, xiii. 10). And why does he keep saying that he will come, and yet never comes? First he says he will come to us by way of Macedonia, and spend the winter with us. Then he says he will come straight from Asia (2 Cor. i. 15, 16). It is plain enough that he dare not come at all, and that is the reason why he is always changing his plans. Now he has sent Titus instead of coming himself, and he is wandering about in Macedonia, though he promised to visit us first. Is not this a fickle, changeable fellow, who keeps saying first Yes and then No? (2 Cor. i. 17 sq.). Even the collection which Paul was making in the various communities was made an opportunity for slander and suspicion. He boasts, they say, of having preached the gospel for nothing during the whole of his stay in Corinth, lasting a year and a half (1 Cor. ix.). Cunning fellow! He only did it that he might slyly catch the people in the meshes of his false gospel (2 Cor. iv. 2), and now he has found a plausible pretext, under cover of which he is making up all that he then declined. Under pretence of a collection for the poor in Jerusalem, he sends his messengers to suck us dry, and then he embezzles the money (2 Cor. xii. 13 sqq.). Considering the well-known character of the Corinthians, we may well suppose that these suspicions, so confidently brought forward and so often repeated, some of which had a plausible appearance, would stick to some extent in the minds even of the better part of the community, which was friendly to the Apostle.

This personal hatred of the Apostle, however, had its source in hatred of his doctrine. It was his gospel to the Gentiles that was a thorn in the flesh of these Jewish Christians. His gospel, they declared, did not rest upon divine revelation (of the Old

Testament); indeed it was in distinct opposition to divine revelation, which assumed, throughout, righteousness by the Law and the privilege of Israel. It was a hidden rather than a revealed gospel. In short, it could only be described as a falsification of the word of God (2 Cor. ii. 17, iv. 1 sqq.). Nor did it rest upon a revelation of Christ to Paul, as he pretended. For the Christ whom he preached (the Lord as the Spirit that abolished the letter-slavery of the Law) was not the true Messiah of Israel who had been born and lived as the son of David in the Jewish land, but simply the creature of his own brain. He preached not Christ, but himself (2 Cor. iv. 5, v. 16, 17). This was not the sincerity of the word of God, but secret, shameful treachery, by means of which Paul desired to entangle men in the meshes of his net (2 Cor. iv. 2).

On these grounds they entirely denied him the right to the very name of Apostle. He had not known Christ after the flesh, they said, and if he appealed to visions and revelations of Christ, that was a sign that his mind was not quite sound (2 Cor. v. 13). They even took steps to call a rival Apostle to Corinth, doubtless one of the twelve or a brother of Jesus (2 Cor. xi. 4).

#### THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Such was the position of affairs in the autumn of the year 58 A.D. And it was this that gave rise to the Epistle known to us as the *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, and written by Paul from Macedonia. He wrote under the greatest excitement. "Without were fightings, within were fears" (vii. 5). The catastrophe which had befallen him in Ephesus had left him trembling in every limb. He begins his letter with fervent thanksgiving to God for his deliverance from the terrible danger to which he had been subject, and describes what he refers to more exactly in the words, "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we



despaired even of life; but we had the sentence of death in ourselves that we might not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead; who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us" (2 Cor. i. 8—10). What was the nature of this danger of death to which he must have been exposed in Ephesus at the close of his stay there, can no longer be ascertained with any certainty. A comparison of the above passage with 2 Cor. iv. 8, has made it probable that Paul, hunted through the streets of Ephesus, driven into a corner and dashed to the ground, had barely escaped with his life, and had suffered severe bodily injury, from which he had not altogether recovered at the time when the Second Epistle to the Corinthians was written. Who was the author of this rage against the Apostle cannot now be determined with any certainty; but it appears from all trustworthy authorities that the struggle with the Jewish Christians in Ephesus was most bitter, and most disastrous to Paul. Only four years after the death of the Apostle, the writer of the "Revelation" perceives that all traces of Paul's work in Ephesus are wiped away, and he can praise the community there for having tried those who say they are Apostles and are not, and found them liars (Rev. ii. 2).

Oppressed by physical suffering (2 Cor. xii. 7, iv. 7—12, 16), pursued in his labours by disappointments and bitter memories, he now sees even his community at Corinth being stirred up to rebel against him by the same party, which becomes bolder and more defiant every year. And if he has succeeded for the moment in winning back again the majority of the community, he yet realizes all the danger that still threatens it. This excitement, this rush of emotion, this depth of sentiment, pervades the whole letter. While Paul's letters generally are hard to understand—indeed this difficulty was already felt even by the ancients (2 Pet. iii. 16)—the Second Epistle to the Corinthians is rendered specially difficult to us at the present day by the abundance of references to personal matters, which were only

known to the readers of the time, by the background of an opposition, the work of which we can only guess at from the allusions made to it in the Epistle itself, and by the tone of passionate excitement which seldom allows the writer to come down to a peaceful, continuous, practical exposition of his thoughts.

The Epistle may be divided into three parts of unequal length: i.—vii.; viii. ix.; x.—xiii.

PART I. Ch. i.—vii. After an outpouring of thanks to God for having delivered him from danger of death, the Apostle explains why he has not, so far, kept his promise to visit the Corinthians. This has not been the result of fickleness or any other cause of the flesh—far be it from the Christian to be double-tongued; with him, as with Christ, let yea be yea, and nay, nay. He has only desired to spare the Corinthians, and not to come to them a second time in sorrow. How could he have had any pleasure in coming amongst them while scandals such as incest remained unpunished in their midst? Now, as he learns from Titus, the community has put away this scandal, and he is pleased with the wisdom of the course they have adopted (i. 3—ii. 11).

When he arrived in Troas from Ephesus, he continues, he waited in vain for Titus to bring him news of the state of things in Corinth. This made him uneasy, and led to his crossing over into Macedonia. But God has abundantly comforted him by the great results which He has caused to follow the proclamation of his gospel in all parts, and from this it is evident that he is no falsifier of the word of God, but is preaching in all sincerity and that his preaching is from God in Christ. Still, he will not boast of his own skill; the glory belongs to God alone, who has equipped him as a servant of the New Covenant; nay, the honour belongs to the glory of this New Covenant itself, which is a service of the spirit, not of the letter, and which infinitely surpasses the Old Covenant in glory (ii. 12—iii. 18).



God, then, having appointed to him a service of such brilliancy and so clear; he is unwearied in commending himself to the conscience of all men by the manifestation of the truth, and not by craftiness or by falsifying the word of God, as his opponents accuse him of doing. His gospel is clear enough to all who have once looked, even for a moment, into the glory of Christ as the Spirit and the Image of the Deity. And this Christ whom he preaches is not a creation of his own brain, but a revelation of God (iv. 1—6).

Nor can any earthly suffering restrain him from fulfilling the service laid upon him. For while the outer man is destroyed, the inner power of the life of Christ working in us is daily renewed; and oppressed by the burden of this earthly frame, he looks with yearning for the new heavenly body which the Christian will receive on the return of his Lord, to please whom at all times is the sole effort of his heart (iv. 7—v. 10).

This picture of his sincere and unwearied preaching of the gospel he has set before them, not that he may boast of himself, but that the Corinthians may have the means of confuting his Judaizing opponents. These opponents, by attaching a religious value to external things (to a national Jewish Messiah), only show that they have not understood the meaning of the death upon the cross. He who does understand it has no longer any Christ but the Christ according to the Spirit, and has himself become a new creature. In the death of Jesus a righteousness has been revealed which is above the Jewish righteousness, a righteousness which is of grace in faith in the reconciliation which has taken place upon Golgotha (v. 11—vi. 2).

In the discharge of this service, the preaching of reconciliation, he seeks to keep himself blameless in all things, that he may not put an offence in the way of any one (vi. 3—10).

Finally, he assures the Corinthians of his love, and describes to them the joyful impression which the account given by Titus has made upon him (vi. 11—13, vii. 2—16).

PART II. Ch. viii. ix. He requires them to make as good a collection as possible for the poor Christians in Jerusalem.

PART III. Ch. x.—xiii. Direct defence of himself against the defamations of his opponents in Corinth, who deny him at every point the right to the apostolic name. This is the most powerful and the most touching of all that Paul has written.

He is altogether deficient, say the opponents, in apostolic power. In his letters he makes himself big, but in his personal dealings he is weak (x. 1—11). The field of his labours, too, he has marked out for himself, not by virtue of an apostolic calling to it, but by his own arbitrary choice (x. 12—18). Compared with the true Apostles of Jesus he is nothing, and he has another spirit than they (xi. 1—6). He has himself felt that he is no Apostle, or he would not have lived at his own expense in Corinth, when the Lord says to his Apostles, The labourer is worthy of his hire (xi. 7—12). The other Apostles alone are true servants of Christ; they have seen the Lord, and are the sons of the promise (xi. 18—23). These opponents were not afraid even to charge the Apostle with having misappropriated the funds entrusted to him from Corinth (xii. 16—18). The Apostle denies all these charges. That he is strong, not in letters only but also in act, he will prove to them when he comes to Corinth (x. 1—11). As for the field of his labours, it is God who has marked it out for him, and he is not in the habit of going beyond it and, like his opponents, trespassing in other men's fields where the work is already done (x. 12—18). He can compare himself with the other Apostles without being troubled by the comparison (xi. 5, 6). As to his gratuitous offer of the gospel to the Corinthians, to this day he is proud of it (xi. 7—11). All the points of superiority of which his opponents boast, he shares with them (xi. 22, 23); and indeed he has laboured and suffered infinitely more than any of them in the service of the gospel (xi. 23—33). And Christ himself has held him worthy of the loftiest revelations and visions, of which he might well boast, if self-glorification were not folly (xii. 1—10).



And the signs of an Apostle have been done in Corinth also, so that this community comes behind no apostolic community (xii. 11—13). The charge of dishonesty and deceit is shameless. He seeks not the property of the Corinthians, but the Corinthians themselves. He will very gladly both bring offerings of his own, and himself be offered up for their souls, little as they love him (xii. 14—18). Finally, he tells them that he is coming, and beseeches them to remove all moral offences beforehand, in order that he may not have to take severe measures (xii. 19—xiii. 10). He concludes with exhortations and greetings (xiii. 11—13).

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EPISTLES.

The two Epistles to the Corinthians are among the most important monuments of the primitive Christian age, and are of unique value. They are the only ones that permit us to see into the inner life of a primitive Christian community in all its aspects. They throw most important light upon the great contest of principle within the Christian community, and they supplement and confirm the view of that period which historical research has brought to light from the Epistle to the Galatians and the Epistle to the Romans. But, finally, they are of inestimable value for the knowledge they give us of the personal character of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, who in these Epistles—thanks to the attacks of his opponents—discloses the most secret recesses of his heart. The keenness of the logician and the nervous excitement of the visionary, faithful love without measure, and deep, powerful indignation, a sense of personal liberty and independence side by side with the tenderest consideration for the weak, great skill and discretion in dealing with men combined with a nature full of fire and passion—above all, a religious life devout and fervent, deep yet varied in its moods, such as will not easily be found in any other, a devotion to the kingdom of God, which regards the dangers and deprivations of a life unique in its hardships as mere trifles, and sacri-

fices everything to the one great aim—who shall enumerate all the characteristics of this remarkable disciple of Jesus, which are disclosed to us in these two Epistles?

For the study of doctrine and ethics also these Epistles afford us great wealth of material. Upon the theological views of Paul which underlie the Epistle to the Galatians, and are worked up into a whole in the Epistle to the Romans, much new light is thrown by the Epistles to the Corinthians, especially upon his view of the person of Christ and the fulfilment of all things. But they are rendered especially rich in rules and suggestions for the moral life by the attempt here made by the Christian spirit, in the most difficult circumstances, to appropriate to itself life in all its variety and set its seal upon it.



## THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

### i.—iv. *The Factions in the Church.*

PAUL has heard that in the community at Corinth different religious parties have arisen, each party relying upon some apostolic name. The source of such divisions is not to be found in the nature of Christianity, but in the pedantic pride of scholarship and the conceited presumptions of philosophy. Christianity, or the doctrine of the Cross, is plain and simple, and requires no great rhetorical skill. The world indeed, in its wisdom, regards the preaching of the Cross as a foolish thing. But what is folly in the eyes of the world is the highest wisdom in the sight of God. In the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, God's plan of salvation, decreed from all eternity, has been realized. The mystery of this plan of salvation the world does not understand, wise as it thinks itself. This mystery is revealed only to the eye of the spirit, to perfected, matured Christians. Even to the Corinthians, when he was still with them, Paul could not disclose all the depths of this divine mystery. They were still too carnal, and unhappily they are so still. If it were not so, they would not quarrel and divide over names of apostles. The teachers of a community are not its masters, but only servants, each of whom continues, upon his own responsibility, to build upon the Christian foundation that has been laid. Apostles are servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Fidelity is the only thing that may be demanded of such. The consciousness of this fidelity lifts them up, superior to all misunderstanding on the part of men.

i. 2. *With all that, &c.*: "With all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in all their places and ours." [The Greek is ambiguous, and may be rendered either thus or as in A.V. It is lit. "With all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, theirs and ours."] The Epistle is intended not only for the community in the city itself, but also for all Chris-

tians dwelling in the neighbourhood. The apostle reckons both Corinth, the centre, and also the scattered residences around, as belonging to his field of labour.

4. *By*: "in."

5. *Utterance*: "doctrine" or "instruction."

7. *The coming*: "the revelation."—By "the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ," is meant the time when the Christ who now sits at the right hand of God, and is hidden from the world, shall reveal himself to the world at his second appearance upon earth, which was expected by the whole apostolic age. This time is called the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9. *His Son Jesus Christ*: From Paul's Epistles we obtain the following view of the personality of Christ. In the beginning of all things, at the time when God made Adam, the earthly man, He also made a second man in heaven of heavenly material, "His own Son." As the race of Adam continued to become more and more lost in sin and misery, God sent His Son, from heaven, upon earth to deliver humanity. In an earthly body formed like the sinful body of man, with which he had clothed himself, he bore the guilt of the race and reconciled it with God. After laying aside this body upon the cross, he returned to heaven, where he is enthroned, beside God, as "our Lord," the Lord of glory.

10. *Beseech*: "exhort."

12. Some suppose that Paul is speaking here of three parties, and that the words, *and I of Christ*, are not the words of a faction at Corinth, but of the apostle himself, who intends by them to indicate by a sudden telling expression his own position, exalted above all faction and looking to Christ alone. The majority, however, suppose that there were four parties, but they are by no means agreed as to the nature of each. At any rate, it is plain that the party of Paul and that of Apollos were connected with one another, and that there was no *essential* difference between them. In our Epistle, Paul evidently puts himself and Apollos upon the same side. Apollos has watered what Paul has planted (iii. 6); and at the time when Paul wrote the Epistle, Apollos was already with him again in Ephesus, and from all appearances they were on the most friendly terms (xvi. 12). As to the substance of the gospel they must have been agreed; they differed



only in the form of their preaching, Apollos apparently having adorned his preaching of the cross with greater rhetorical and philosophical brilliancy. This might give occasion to many of the Corinthian Christians, factious as these Greeks were, to set down their earlier teacher as inferior to the later one, and to speak contemptuously of the unostentatious doctrine of the cross. The apostle's defence of his preaching of the cross against these Apollinists (1 Cor. i. ii.) develops into a defence of it against the attacks both of the Jewish-Christian party and of Hellenistic culture. If, however, the two parties already spoken of—the Pauline and that of Apollos—are fundamentally the same, it is probable that the Cephas party and the Christ party were likewise only different shades of the one Jewish-Christian or Petrine party. And this is all the more probable, inasmuch as we find no clear traces in the Epistle whereby we might recognize the peculiar characteristics of a Christ party essentially distinct from the Petrine party. When Paul (2 Cor. v. 16) rejects those who rely upon a Christ after the flesh, he is referring to the Jewish apostles and Jewish Christians, who boasted of their personal intercourse with Jesus as the national Jewish Messiah, in opposition to Paul, who had never lived with Jesus personally. Within this Judaistic party there early arose different shades of opinion. Thus James, "the brother of the Lord," the head of the Christian community at Jerusalem, appears a still stricter representative of Jewish customs and views of life within the sphere of Christendom than Peter (Gal. ii. 12). It is possible that the Christ party in Corinth relied upon James as the kinsman of Jesus, and regarded itself as the party which was most directly connected with "Christ according to the flesh." In this case we should have in the main the same two parties in Corinth which we meet with in all the conflicts of that age, the Petrine and the Pauline, the Jewish Christian and the Gentile Christian, the chief difference between which consisted in a difference of view as to the significance of the death of Christ upon the cross. Paul saw in this fact of the death of Christ upon the cross an abolition of the Jewish Law and all the privileges of a chosen people (see note on Gal. iii. 13). The others absolutely declined to accept such extreme conclusions.

18. *Preaching*: "word."—*Are saved*: "are being saved."—*The power of God*: "a divine power" [lit. "a power of God"].

19. Is. xxix. 14, quoted from the Greek version.—[*Understanding . . . prudent*: similar words in the Greek; as if we said, “the intelligence of the intelligent.”]

20. Is. xxxiii. 18.

21. *After that*: “since.”—*Wisdom*: “its wisdom.”

22. *For*: “since.”—*A sign*: “signs” [so all the best MSS.]—The Jews demand divine confirmation by signs (John vi. 30); the Greeks, a new philosophy.

23. *A stumbling-block*: A crucified Messiah is the very reverse of that which the name Messiah itself conveys, which the Old Testament foretells, and Jewish theology requires.—*Foolishness*: The reverse of the philosophy which, according to ver. 22, was required by the Gentiles.

26 sqq. Read, “For consider your calling,” &c.: Consider who have become Christians in Corinth; not those held in high esteem and cultivated people, but for the most part persons of the lower ranks, a proof that what is regarded as high and wise in the eyes of the world is not so in the sight of God.

27. *Confound*: “put to shame.”

30. *Is made*: “has been made” [lit. “was made”].

31. Is. ix. 24.

ii. 4. *Enticing*: “persuasive.”

5. *Stand in*: “consist of” [lit. “be in”].

6 sqq. *Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect*: “but that which we speak is wisdom among them that are perfect.”—In the death of Jesus upon the cross, God has carried out a decree for the deliverance of sinful humanity which was determined before the foundation of the world. The men who stood high in knowledge and in church and state have not recognized this decree, else had they not treated Jesus as a transgressor. But to the Christian, God has made known, by His Spirit, His purpose in the death of Jesus. As being enlightened by the Spirit of God, the Christian is the “spiritual” man, who possesses the true standard by which to judge of all things.

9. This passage is not found anywhere in the Old Testament exactly as it stands here. It is either a confused recollection of Is. lxiv. 4 and lxv. 17, or else it is from an apocryphal book.

11, 12. *Are*: “have been.”—As only the spirit of man knows that which exists and takes place in *man*, so only the *Spirit of*



God, communicated to the believers and implanted in them by Christ, knows and understands that which is in and from God.

13. *Comparing spiritual things with spiritual*: "judging spiritual things spiritually."

14. *Discerned*: "judged" [the same word in the Greek as *judgeth* and *judged* in the next verse].

16. Is. xl. 13.

iii. 5. *To every man*: "to each."

9. *Husbandry* should be "field."

12. *Now*: "But."

13—15. *The day shall declare it*: What is meant is the day of the Lord, the return of Christ to judgment upon earth, hence a day which is revealed in fire. Comp. Matt. iii. 11: the Messiah shall baptize with fire. (*It shall be revealed by fire*, should be "It," i.e. the day, "is revealed in fire"). Christ when he comes will decide which building is to remain and which is not. He whose work Christ allows to remain will, in addition to the salvation which he receives as a Christian, receive also a special reward (ver. 14); he whose work Christ destroys will be saved indeed, because he has laboured according to the measure of his strength and knowledge, but he will not have any special reward, and the perception of the instability of his work will burn him like a fire (ver. 15).

16 sqq. The community is a house of God (ver. 9), a temple. Woe be unto him who desecrates this temple by factiousness and pride. Therefore let no man exalt himself in the assumption of superior wisdom; and again, let no one humiliate himself by becoming the slave of a man, but let the Christian be lord over everything.

17. [*Defile . . . . destroy*: same word in the Greek, meaning to spoil or corrupt, and hence to destroy.]—*Which temple ye are*, should be "which ye are," i.e. ye also are holy.

18. *Seemeth to be*: "thinketh that he is."

19. Job v. 13.

20. Psalm xciv. 11.

iv. 3. *Man's judgment*: lit. "the day of man." The human judgment-day is contrasted with the day of the Lord (see note on i. 7).

4. *I know nothing by myself*: "I am not conscious of anything [i.e. any wrong] in myself."

7. *Who maketh thee to differ from another*: “who preferred thee?”

8—13. These verses are written ironically. In their comfortable satisfaction in the possession of Christianity, the Corinthians have become puffed up, and contemptuously reject a man like Paul, who in the service of the gospel daily puts up with deprivations, scorn, and mockery from the world.

8. *Now*: “Already.”

9. *Last* [so literally]: “as most insignificant of all.”

13. *Filth*: “curse” [properly that which is thrown away in cleansing anything, so a scape-goat or anything that bears a curse away with it].—*Offscouring of all things*: better, “scum of all.”

16. *Beseech*: “exhort.”

17. *My ways which be in Christ*: i.e. “my Christian dealings, conduct, and doctrine.”

19. *Speech*: “word.” [The same in Greek as “word” in the next verse.]

#### v. *Censure of Sins of Unchastity.*

1. *That one should have his father's wife*: i.e. have married his step-mother while the father was still living.

3—5. Paul assumes the possession of the miraculous power of inflicting some striking physical punishment, probably some disease, upon the guilty man at the very moment when the Christian community in Corinth is gathered together, and he hopes that the guilty man may thereby be corrected, and be saved on the judgment-day of the Lord Jesus.

6—8. A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough; a single vice corrupts the whole community. Therefore put away the old sinful nature and become new men, as indeed “as saints” according to your Christian calling, properly speaking, you already are (2 Cor. v. 17). As the Jews put away leaven before the Passover, so let us celebrate our Christian Easter by a pure moral disposition.

7. *For even Christ our passover was sacrificed for us*: “for we also have a passover, Christ who was sacrificed for us.”

9. The counsel which Paul gave to the Corinthians, in an epistle which is no longer extant, to have no fellowship with the



unchaste, did not mean to have no dealings with them at all—that would be equivalent to going out of the world—but what he meant was that they should not tolerate such as members of the Christian community. Them that are without, the non-Christians, God will judge; but the Christians must thrust out the wicked from their fellowship.

9. *An epistle*: “the epistle” [i.e. the epistle which he had previously written].

10. *Yet not altogether*: “I do not mean.”

11. *I have written*: “I wrote.”

12. *Also*: omitted.

13. *Therefore*: omitted.

vi. 1—11. *Censure of Law-suits before Heathen Judges.*

1. *Unjust* = heathen.—*Saints* = Christians.

2, 3. Paul assumes that in the kingdom which Christ will establish upon his return, the Christians will judge the world (comp. Matt. xix. 28), and especially the bad angels.

4. *Least esteemed*: “despised.”

7. *There is utterly a fault*: “this in itself is a fault.”

11. *In the name*: “by the name.”

vi. 12—vii. 40. *The Legitimate and Illegitimate Intercourse of the Sexes.*

Paul here attempts, on the ground of personal liberty and the Christian spirit, to deal with the immorality of unchastity, which was pretty generally regarded in antiquity as a thing which could not be dealt with and which was itself allowable. The apostle's views may be summed up somewhat as follows:—(1) Although certain individual organs of the body—as, for example, the stomach—have only a temporary importance, and cease to exist at death, yet the body itself as a whole has a permanent importance, since it is raised by God at death. (2) The body is an instrument in the service of Christ for the purpose of the kingdom of God, and so cannot without moral inconsistency (i.e. without sin) be made at the same time a servant of sensuality. (3) The body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, and so must not be made a harbour for the lusts of the flesh.

16. *Saith he*: i.e. God. Gen. ii. 24. [The words in Gen. ii. 24

are either spoken by Adam or are the writer's comment. It would be better to render, as in Rom. xv. 10 sqq., "It saith," to be understood impersonally.]

20. *Are bought*: "have been bought."

vii. 2. *To avoid fornication*: Marriage is regarded by Paul as a means for providing against unchastity.

5. *That Satan tempt you not for your incontinency*: That the long absence may not become a temptation to adultery.

6. Read, "But this I say out of consideration, and not by way of commandment."

12 sqq. Provisions regarding mixed marriages. "Unbelieving" means either Jew or Gentile who is not a Christian.

14. The husband or wife who is not a Christian is sanctified by fellowship with the Christians, just as the children of a Christian marriage are sanctified as such. The passage assumes that children were not then baptized, or else their holiness would have rested on a different basis.

15. *To peace*: "in peace."

16. This verse gives the reason why one who is not a Christian should be allowed to depart if unwilling to remain. Such a one must not be forcibly detained in the hope of domestic intercourse leading to conversion.

18. If any one was a Jew when called, he must not endeavour by artificial means to make it appear that he was a Gentile. If any one was a Gentile when he was called, he must not take up the sign of Judaism.

21, 22, 23. *Servant* should be "slave."

21. *Mayest* should be "canst."—Even if you can become free, prefer to retain your position as a slave, so that in this very indifference to external circumstances you may manifest your inner liberty as a Christian.

23. *Be not ye*: "become not."

26. *For*: "because of."

29—32. The time until the return of Christ, and the transformation of the world connected with it, is short. Therefore the Christian must keep himself inwardly free from the world. To the apostle it seems no longer worth while to be founding families and establishing houses.

29. Read, "But this I say, brethren, as for the rest the time



is short. They that have wives, let them be as though they had none," &c.

31. *As not abusing it*, should be "as though they did not make use of it."

32. *Carefulness*: "cares."

39. *Only in the Lord*: i.e. let her marry a Christian.

40. *And I think also that I have*: "and I think that I also have" [i.e. as well as other teachers].

The views of marriage which the apostle expresses in this chapter show us that he had not escaped from the idea of external opposition which the ancient world supposed to exist between spirit and flesh. He does not give the moral and pleasing domestic side of marriage its full rights. He can only appreciate marriage as pre-eminently a remedy for unchastity. Celibacy, where it can be honourably carried out, appears to him the ideal of Christian life. It cannot be denied that in this respect the Catholic Church has consistently followed the lines that Paul laid down.

#### viii. *Concerning the eating of Things offered to Idols.*

By things offered to idols is meant the flesh which was not actually used in the altar sacrifice. Part of this fell to the priests as their fee, and part was reserved by those who made the offering for their own use. This latter portion, then, was partly consumed in sacrificial feasts held in or near the temple by the worshippers, but some of it was taken to their own homes for the ordinary domestic meals, and some was sold in the market. It might thus happen that Christians bought it, or they might be invited by relations or friends to the sacrificial feasts or to domestic festivities in which such meat was eaten, and thus in one or other of these ways they might come to partake of the flesh offered to idols. The more scrupulous consciences stumbled at this as an offence. Others, however, only made it an additional occasion for the display of their superior Christian knowledge and free customs. Paul decides that, in itself, the eating of flesh offered to idols is allowable: first, because the idol is nothing; and secondly, because eating meats is itself an outward act, and has nothing to do with religion, which is within; but that in any particular case the Christian must abstain from availing himself

of his liberty, as soon as his conduct becomes an offence to the scrupulous conscience of a weaker brother, or causes him to fall.

[1. *Edifieth*: i.e. "builds up" (the spiritual temple).]

5, 6. *For though there be, &c.*: "And though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (since there are many gods and many lords), yet we have but one God, the Father," &c. Though Paul knows that an idol is nothing, yet he here supposes that the deities worshipped by the heathen have a real existence. He denies them the divine nature, but regards them as evil spirits (demons) who exercise a certain dominion over men (see x. 20).

[6. *In him*: lit. "unto him."]

7. *For some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat*: "For some still have scruples about the idol and yet eat."

#### ix. *The Duty of Self-denial in the Service of the Cause.*

This principle, which Paul has now laid down, regarding the question of eating flesh offered to idols, viz. that the Christian must abstain from the exercise of his personal right and liberty lest he should injure the sacred cause, he has himself followed in his apostolic labours, especially in his preaching of the gospel without payment, being brought thus to refuse to receive any payment, not by insincere motives such as his Corinthian opponents accused him of, but by his interest in the cause.

4—6. Should not I have a right to be supported by the communities in which I preach, just as the other apostles are, with their wives and children? Are Barnabas and I alone bound to support ourselves by our own manual labour?

5. *A sister, a wife*: "a sister [i.e. a fellow-believer] as a wife."

6. *Have not we power?* should be "have we no right?"

9. The ancient way of threshing corn was to make the oxen tread the grain out with their hoofs. Avaricious peasants muzzled the oxen so employed. This is forbidden in Deut. xxv. 4. The apostle, however, cannot believe that this commandment is meant to be understood literally, but he interprets it allegorically, and draws from it the meaning found in ver. 10.

[10. *He that thresheth in hope*—should be *partaker of his hope*: The best MSS. have, "He that thresheth, in hope of partaking."]



13. The priests derive their means of subsistence from the gifts of the worshippers and the sacrifices of the altar.

14. Comp. Luke x. 7.

15—18. The preaching of the gospel being laid upon Paul as a duty, his only reward and glory pertains to that which is over and above the actual preaching, viz. the preaching *gratuitously*.

18. *That I abuse not, &c.*, should be "in order that I may not make use of my right in the gospel" (i.e. in preaching the gospel).

22. *Am made*: "have become."

23. *Be partaker thereof with you*: "share in it."

25. [*Striveth for the mastery*: The word in Greek is used especially of contending in the public games.]—*Is temperate*, should be "exercises self-control."

x. *Instruction concerning Participation in Sacrificial Feasts and partaking of Flesh offered to Idols.*

1—27.

The apostle shows by examples from Jewish history how pernicious any admixture of heathenism is, and warns his readers against participation in Gentile sacrificial feasts, by which those who so participate are brought under the influence of the evil spirits which control and direct heathenism, just as the Jew in his sacrifice is under the influence of Jehovah, and the Christian at the Lord's Supper is under the influence of the spirit of Christ.

1—4. Everywhere in the history of the Jews Paul sees allusions to Christian affairs and circumstances. In the cloud which accompanied the people of Israel in its march through the wilderness, and in the passage through the Red Sea, he sees the prototype of Christian baptism. In the manna and the water from the rock he sees the Christian holy supper. As previously (viii. 6) he regarded Christ living in heaven before his appearance upon earth, as working in the creation of the world, so here he regards him as guiding the people of Israel.

5—11. The judgments executed upon the lustful and rebellious people (Num. xiv. 16, 29, xi. 4 sqq., xxv. 9, xxi. 4—6, xvi. 41 sqq., xvii.) are likewise regarded as typical.

7. Exod. xxxii. 6, from the Greek version.

11. *For ensamples*: "as a type." [The best MSS. have, "by way of a figure" or "type."]—"Upon whom the end of the world is come:" This refers to the expectation of the immediately impending destruction of the world.

17. *For we being many, &c.*: "For it is one bread, so we being many, are one body," &c.

18. *Partakers of*: "in the communion of."

20. The heathen deities appear here again as actually existent beings, not gods, however, as the Gentiles suppose, but evil spirits, devils, "demons" (viii. 5).

23—33. All flesh that is sold in the meat-market may be bought and eaten, and no questions should be asked about it. But if any one, whether a Gentile at a feast out of pure wantonness, or a weak Christian who is over-scrupulous, makes it a point of conscience, then the flesh offered to idols must be avoided.

[23. The best MSS. omit *for me* both times.]

28. [*This is offered in sacrifice unto idols*: i.e. is part of a sacrifice that has been offered. Though referring of course only to heathen sacrifice, there is no mention, in the Greek, of "idols," which would be out of place in the case of a Gentile mentioning that the meat was part of a sacrifice to his gods.]—*For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof*, should be omitted.

30. *By grace*: "with thanksgiving."

#### xi. *Concerning Disorders in Worship.*

##### 2—16.

Women (in accordance with the Greek custom) must cover their heads with a veil at worship, as a symbol of their subjection. The attempts which have been made in Corinth to break down the barrier of this custom, which has been appointed to woman, are against God and nature. On the other hand, Paul recommends to the men the Greek custom of praying with the head uncovered, whereas in the East men prayed with the head covered.

6. To pass from one immodest step to another is just as logical as to abstain from the lesser in order to avoid the greater.

7. *Glory*: image of His majesty.

10. For this cause ought the woman to have "a power" (i.e.



the veil, probably as a sign of the power which the man has over her) upon her head, because of the angels, probably that the angels may not be excited to evil lusts by seeing her. There is a reference here to Gen. vi. 2, 4.

## 17—34.

The Lord's Supper is a solemn religious act, the desecration of which draws down a heavy judgment.

17. *In this that I declare unto you*, should be "in enjoining this upon you."

22. *Them that have not*: "them that have nothing" [i.e. the poor].—*Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not*: "Shall I praise you? In this I praise you not."

23—25. See note on Luke xxii. 19, 20.

23. *Of the Lord*: i.e. from the tradition of the twelve.

29. *Damnation*: "judgment."—*Not discerning* should be "not distinguishing," i.e. not distinguishing the Lord's body from ordinary food.

30. *And many sleep*: "have fallen asleep," i.e. are dead [lit. "a good many are falling asleep"]. Paul regards sickness in the community and the death of many members, which has already taken place, as a divine penalty for partaking of the Lord's Supper unworthily. The death of Christians who had lived in the belief in the return of their Lord was a source of perplexity to the apostolic age (comp. 1 Thess. iv. 13—18).

xii.—xiv. *Concerning the Gifts of the Spirit in the Christian Community.*

The gifts which operate in the community have all one source, viz. the Spirit; and they all serve the same end, viz. the edification of the community, which is, as it were, one body having many members. Hence all the gifts can only have their value by means of love, which is itself the highest thing of all; and the gift which is of greater service to the community must be preferred to that which is of less service, so that "prophecy" must be preferred to speaking with tongues. To this are added various ordinances with reference to the orderly conduct of divine worship.

xii. 1—3. As Christians, it is necessary that you should have some knowledge of the varied inspiration of the divine Spirit,

whereas when you were Gentiles you followed blindly the oracles of your idols. Therefore I give you to know that every utterance of the true Spirit of God in man bears an unfailing sign by which it may be known, viz. the acknowledgment of Jesus—not simply the absence of all hostility to him (*calling Jesus accursed*), but joyful submission to him as the one Lord.

1. *I would not have you ignorant*: i.e. I do not wish to leave you in any uncertainty.

[5. *Administrations* should be “ministries” or “services,” as in Rom. xii. 7.]

10. *Divers kinds of tongues* should be “speaking in tongues” [lit. “kinds of tongues.”]

27. *In particular*: “each according to his part.”

28. *Diversities of tongues* should be “speaking with tongues” [lit. “kinds of tongues”].

31. *Covet earnestly*: “follow after” [lit. pursue with emulation].—*A more excellent way*: lit. “an exceedingly suitable way,” i.e. to obtain the best gifts. It is love alone that gives their value to all of them.

xiii. 1. *Charity*: “love.” [So throughout the chapter, and indeed wherever the word occurs in the New Testament.]

5. *Thinketh no evil*: “doth not pursue injuries” [more exactly, perhaps, “taketh no account of injury”].

[8, 10. *Fail . . . . vanish away . . . . be done away*: The same word in Greek each time, lit. “be done away.”]

10. *That which is perfect*: The perfect state of the world which Paul expects with the return of Christ.

[11. Lit. “When I have become a man, I have done away childish things.”]

12. *Through a glass darkly*: “by means of a mirror in a dark saying.”

xiv. 1—15. Speaking with tongues, i.e. speaking without clear consciousness, the utterance of disconnected sounds while in a state of ecstasy (see note on Acts ii. 4), is not so precious a gift as prophecy, i.e. preaching with prophetic inspiration, the clear exposition of religious truths in the power of the spirit, because the former is unintelligible to the hearer, whereas the latter instructs him.

1. *Rather*: “most of all” [lit. “more”].



11. *Barbarian*: "unintelligible" [better, "a foreigner." The word means properly one whose language is unintelligible to the person who so calls him.]

12. *Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church*: "Seek to edify the community, in order that ye may abound in all things."

16. He who understands nothing of the speaking with tongues cannot even make the thanksgiving so uttered his own by saying "Amen" to it.—*Bless* should be "givist thanks."

20. [*Children* the second time should be "babes."]—*Men*: "perfect" [lit. "complete," i.e. of full age].

21. Is. xxviii. 11, 12, from the Greek version. According to Isaiah, God will speak to His people, that believe not the word of the prophets, with other tongues, i.e. through foreign nations which He sends against His own people to punish their unbelief; consequently "tongues" are the signs threatened by God for unbelievers.—Paul here, as often elsewhere, treats the Old Testament in rabbinical fashion; for the tongues in Is. xxviii. have nothing to do with the tongues in Corinth.

23—25. No hearer is brought to Christian faith by means of the speaking with tongues, whereas by intelligible instruction one who is not a Christian who comes to listen may be convinced of his sin and error.

29. *The other*: "the others" [so, or "others" without the article, all MSS.].

31. *Comforted*: "exhorted."

32. The spirit which rules the speaker is again subject to the will of the speaker. Hence each one can so bridle the spirit that moves him as to make an orderly succession of speeches possible.

34. *They are commanded to be under obedience*: "let them be subject."—*The law*: Gen. iii. 16.

36. *Came it unto you only*: "came it only unto you" (and not to others). We must supply at the close of this verse, in order to make the meaning clear, "so that you should venture to introduce such innovations as are found in no other community."

37. *Let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord*: "let him acknowledge the things that I write unto you, for they are the commandments of the Lord."

[39. *Covet*: lit. "desire with emulation."]

xv. *The Resurrection of the Dead.*

1—11.

The testimony to the resurrection of Jesus is sure.

3, 4. *According to the Scriptures*: i.e. the Old Testament (Is. liii. [4—6] 9, 10; Hos. vi. 2).

3—9. We have here the earliest account of the resurrection of Jesus. The narratives of our Gospels concerning this event are all of considerably later date. Hence it is of decisive importance to consider exactly what it really is that Paul says. Among the Christians at Jerusalem he has heard that Jesus arose on the third day, and appeared at different times to a number of his adherents. Further, he declares that last of all Christ appeared to him also. The first question is, *How did Paul understand these appearances of the risen Christ?* And this at least is certain to begin with, that he did not understand them to have been such as the Evangelists have represented them in their narratives. He did not regard them as having taken place in the body which Jesus formerly had, and which had risen from the grave. It was not in an earthly human body that he appeared, not therefore in a body on the wounds of which one could lay one's fingers (John xx. 27), or that eats bread and fish (John xxi. 9, 12, 13), or walks from Jerusalem to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 15 sqq.). All this is directly opposed to Paul's teaching in this chapter (vv. 35—51) concerning the nature of the body of the resurrection; for according to him, this body is not the former natural, earthly, sensual body, but a new spiritual, supermundane body; flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and corruption cannot put on incorruption. It is also directly opposed to the fundamental view of the death of Jesus, expressed by Paul in all his Epistles. In the death of Jesus the flesh was nailed to the cross and done away with for ever, and with it the Law and the guilt of men and the sway of fleshly lusts are also done away. Paul, then, regarded the appearances of the Risen as having taken place in a supermundane, heavenly, spiritual body, evidently in that same shining body which, according to the apostle, Christ had in heaven before he came down upon earth and took upon himself "the likeness of sinful human flesh" (Rom. viii. 3). In full



accordance with this, he regarded the appearances of the risen Christ as taking place, not from the grave, not from earth, but from heaven, as even the Book of Acts (ix. 3—7) represents the appearance of Christ to Paul on the way to Damascus. The second question is, *What was it that really occurred?* Here unbiassed research can follow no other path than that of inquiry into the statements of the undisputed Epistles of Paul, as the oldest Christian documents. Now Paul, speaking of his own life, tells us of frequent "revelations and appearances of the Lord" which were granted to him. According to Gal. ii. 2, it was in consequence of such a revelation that he went up to Jerusalem seventeen years after his conversion, just at the time when opposition to his gospel had thrown him into a state of the greatest excitement. On one occasion he specially selects one from among a series of "visions and revelations of the Lord," viz. a snatching up into Paradise and into the third heaven, when he heard words which no man could repeat (2 Cor. xii. 1—5).

Such states occurring in the experience of the human soul, of which the history of the world can show many examples, are known to science as visions. These visions are really occurrences within the hidden depths of an excited mental life, in which the enthusiast sees or hears things external to himself just as vividly as if they were actually presented to eye or ear. In view of the plain words of Paul, no one denies that he experienced such states. What is to prevent us from supposing that the appearance of the Lord also, to which he here appeals (xv. 8), was of this kind? In the original Greek, he uses similar words of the experience spoken of here (xv. 8) [*was seen*] and the occurrence referred to above (2 Cor. xii. 1—5) [*visions*]. But if Paul saw the risen Christ in a vision, why should not all the others have done the same? There is not a syllable to indicate that the appearances to the others were different from the appearance to him. He introduces all six appearances, which he relates, in the same context and with the same word. And when in reply to those who objected that he had not seen the Lord, and so occupied an inferior position to that of the other apostles, he appeals to the fact that he also has seen the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. ix. 1), there is no doubt that he regards his seeing of the Lord as of the same kind as theirs, and entirely upon a level with it.

Moreover, the Christ-visions of the first Christians answer entirely to the conditions which science lays down for the origin of visions generally. If we realize the terrible shock to the mind which the unexpected crucifixion of Jesus caused in his adherents, the inner struggle between their Messianic faith and this un-Messianic death, if we realize the enthusiastic moods of the first Christians generally, of which the Epistles to the Corinthians themselves give such abundant evidence, then we shall find the visions of the resurrection just as intelligible as all the other visions of which we have historical records.

## xv. 12—28.

Our own resurrection is inseparably connected with the resurrection of Jesus. For this purpose Christ came, the essence of whose being is the quickening spirit (ver. 45), viz. to make that which is dead alive. First he himself arose. At his second coming he will awaken the Christians who have fallen asleep and change those who are still living, and thus the dominion of Christ on earth will begin, during which he will destroy all powers that are hostile to God, and finally death itself. Then Christ also will lay aside his sceptre and deliver up the dominion unto God, who will then be all in all.

23—28. In these verses, supplemented and made complete by vv. 51 sqq., Paul gives his view of "the last things" in bold outline, which is afterwards enriched by the addition of the view of the conversion of all Israel in the Epistle to the Romans (Rom. xi. ; see note on Rom. xi. 30, 31). This picture contains three divisions:

(1) The return of Christ from heaven to earth, and, what is immediately connected with it, the return from the under-world to earth, in new bodies, of the believers who have died, and the change of the faithful who are still alive at the time of this great event.

(2) The period of the dominion of Christ upon earth, during which he, supported by his saints, the Christians (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3), will subdue and do away with all powers hostile to the divine kingdom, Satan with his wicked angels and all his adherents, and finally death itself. The expression "do away" [A.V. "destroy"], which Paul here uses of death and of the enemies of God and



Christ, as well as the final goal which he expected when God should be all in all (or in all men), is evidence in favour of his having assumed that there would be a complete destruction and extermination of the wicked, but not of his having supposed, as the later Church has done, that the wicked would be reserved for eternal torments. How long this business of subjugating and destroying hostile powers, and this dominion of Christ upon earth will last, the apostle does not say.

(3) After Christ shall have set out the kingdom of God in its purity, he will lay his sceptre at the feet of God, who has subjected all unto him, and who will henceforth be all in all.

In these fundamental conceptions of the last things, Paul is in essential agreement with the very writer of the New Testament who in other respects forms the most distinct contrast to him, viz. the author of the "*Revelation of John*." The author of the *Revelation* also assumes (*Rev.* xix. 11—xxii. 7) that there will be the same three stages:—1. The second coming of Christ, with the return of the righteous from the lower world to earth, and with a victory over the hostile powers of the devil and of anti-Christian government. 2. The dominion of Christ with his saints upon earth, the period of which he fixes at one thousand years. 3. After a final defeated attempt at resistance on the part of the evil powers, the absolute dominion of God, who, upon the new earth, is all in all, its temple and its sun.

The difference between these Biblical views and those of the later Christian Church is evident at once. 1. Neither Paul nor the John of the "*Revelation*" knows anything of the pious going to heaven when they die. Those who die go to the lower world and return from it to earth. 2. Paul says nothing about the wicked being condemned to eternal torments, and the *Revelation* speaks of this perhaps only in figurative language, which does not exclude the idea of destruction. 3. Both regard the return of Christ as immediately impending, and expect it at once. 4. The intermediate stage of a kingdom lasting a thousand years, or a period for the dominion of Christ upon earth, has been expressly rejected by the churches. 5. The Biblical writers regard the earth, and not heaven, as the proper scene of the perfection of the kingdom of God.

## xv. 29—34.

Additional grounds for belief in the resurrection :

(1) The action of those Christians who receive baptism over the graves of non-Christians who have died, so that by virtue of this vicarious baptism the latter may be raised with the rest to share in the kingdom of Christ, assumes the reality of the resurrection. (2) What is the use of all the struggle and suffering in the service of the kingdom of God if with this life all is over ?

29. This verse shows us that some of the first Christians already entertained views of the magical effects of ecclesiastical ceremonies, such as were further developed in the later Catholic Church in its belief in the effects of baptism, of masses for the dead, &c.

[31. *Your rejoicing* should be “your glorying,” i.e. the glorying which I have in you.]

[34. *Awake to righteousness* (lit. righteously): The verb here used in the Greek means to recover from drunkenness, to be sober again.]

## xv. 35—50.

The resurrection does not take place in the same earthly, material body which we have borne here, but in a celestial, spiritual body similar to the celestial shining body which Christ bore before his incarnation, and in which he also rose from the dead after his earthly body had been nailed to the cross (see above, vv. 3—9). According to Paul, the flesh, i.e. the sensual, finite and material constitution of our bodies, as of creation generally, is the source of imperfection and sin. Christ, the quickening spirit, came to destroy the power of the flesh. Hence, according to Paul, the consequence of Christ's work is that the whole creation will once more be set free from the burden of finiteness under which it now groans (Rom. viii. 18—24), and, more especially, that man will be changed from the material being, animated simply by a soul, into a spiritual being. Hence the power of the Christian spirit will be manifested in the believer by his already living to the Lord while still in the flesh, and crucifying the lusts of the flesh (Gal. ii. 20, v. 24). After death it will be shown by his resurrection in a new spiritual body.

45. Quotation of Gen. ii. 7 from the Greek version, and ampli-



fication of it by the addition of the contrast of the second Adam with the first Adam.—[*Quickening*: the Greek etymologically is “making alive,” which makes the contrast plainer between the soul, which simply lives, and the spirit, which makes to live.]

[49. *We shall also bear*: The majority of the best MSS. have “Let us also bear.”]

#### xv. 51—58.

At the second coming of Christ, the Christians who still live will be changed from beings with a material body into celestial spiritual beings.

55. Hosea xiii. 14, from the Greek; comp. Is. xxv. 8.—*Grave*=the under-world, the realms of the dead. [The MS. authority is in favour of the reading “death,” instead of “Hades,” translated *grave* in A.V., which some read.]

56. See notes on Rom. v. 12, 20, vii. 8 sqq.

#### xvi. *Personal and Business Matters.*

1—4. The collection. Comp. 2 Cor. viii. ix.

[3. With a different punctuation, approved by many editors and translators, we may here render, “Whomsoever ye shall approve, with letters (i.e. of introduction) I will send them,” &c.]

4. *And if it be meet*, &c.: “and if it be worth my going also.”

5. See notes on Acts xix. 21, xx. 1 sq. According to 2 Cor. i. 15, 23, even this was a change of plan.—[*I do pass*, &c.: i.e. I really am coming through Macedonia.]

10. See Acts xix. 22.—[*As I also do*: i.e. as much as I myself.]

14. *Charity*: “love.”

17. *Coming* should be “presence.”—[*That which was lacking*: i.e. my loss in not having you.]

18. *Acknowledge ye them that are such*: pay attention to brethren of this kind; learn to esteem them rightly; take them as your example.

19. Concerning Aquila and Priscilla, and their residence in Ephesus, see Acts xviii. 18, 19.

22. *Let him be Anathema*: i.e. "let him be accursed."—*Maranatha*: properly, in two words, Maran Atha, i.e. "Our Lord cometh" (Aramaic). The apostle sums up by a watchword, as it were, the whole solemn purpose and earnest tone of the Epistle.



## THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

### PART I.—CH. i.—vii.

#### i. 4—11.

Thanks to God for deliverance from danger of death.

It is no longer possible to ascertain what was the nature of this danger to which the apostle was exposed in Asia.

6. Read, "Either we have tribulation, then it is for your comfort and salvation; or we are comforted, then it is for your comfort which is proved by your suffering with patience the same that we also suffer."

[9. See pp. 211 sq.]

#### i. 12—14.

It appears that Paul's opponents had accused him of vacillation and want of earnestness because he had not kept his promise to visit the Corinthians (see note on 1 Cor. xvi. 5). But vacillation has no place in the character of the Christian. What he promises he adheres to, as all the promises of God have been fulfilled in Christ. Paul's delay in coming to the Corinthians was caused, not by his own vacillation, but by his desire to spare them.

12. *Rejoicing*: "boasting."

13, 14. Read, "For we write unto you nothing else than that which ye read, and indeed acknowledge. But I hope that ye will so acknowledge us also unto the end, as ye have (already) in part acknowledged us, namely, that we are your glory," &c.

#### i. 15—24.

17. *Or the things that I purpose*, &c.: "Or the things that I purpose do I purpose according to the flesh? Not so; but with me yea is yea, and nay is nay." [The lit. meaning of the Greek is either as given in A.V. or . . . "do I purpose according to the flesh, in order that with me yea may be yea, and nay, nay,"

in which case we must take the question to end at "flesh," and understand the answer "certainly not" as supplied in Luther's version.]

18. *But as God is true* should be "But God is faithful, that," &c.

24. *By faith:* "in the faith."

## ii. 1—11.

This passage probably refers to the censure of the incestuous son in the First Epistle (v. 1 sq.). It appears that the community had inflicted a penalty, but not such as Paul had demanded ("in part," ver. 5); but the culprit seems meanwhile to have reformed, and so Paul declares himself satisfied, and gladly adds his forgiveness.

1—4. I did not wish to come to you in sorrow; I wished to rejoice in you. But how could that be possible as long as you felt yourselves grieved by me? Can one who is grieved cause any one to rejoice?

5. Read, "But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me (alone); but in part—that I may not accuse you—he hath grieved) all of you."—"Accuse you:" i.e. of want of care for my sorrow, and at the same time of indifference in regard to the crime.

10. [*To whom I forgave it:* The best MSS. read, "what I forgave."]—*In the person of Christ* should be "in the face of Christ."

11. Probably Paul attributes it to Satan's crafty device, that the culprit might be driven to despair by too severe treatment.

## ii. 12—17.

Here the blessed results which followed his labours for the gospel are described. The gospel penetrates the ancient world, which had fallen into corruption, like a sweet savour. Only by pure Christianity, freed from Jewish precepts, such as Paul preached, can such victories be obtained, and not by the adulterated gospel of his Judaistic opponents. Not, however, that Paul wishes to praise himself. The entrance which Christianity finds everywhere it owes not to the merits of its preachers, who of their



own strength can do nothing, but only to its own inner glory (ch. iii.).

12. *Of the Lord*: "in the Lord."

iii. 1—5.

It is plain that Paul's opponents in Corinth were furnished with letters of commendation from Jerusalem. Paul, however, needs no letter of commendation either to or from Corinth. The community itself, which owes its existence to him, is sufficient commendation for him. The master's hand is known by his work.

3. *The epistle*: "an epistle."

iii. 6—18.

The Christian religion as distinguished from the Jewish service of the Law.

Christianity is spirit, Judaism the letter. Christianity brings life, the Mosaic service of the Law brings condemnation (Rom. vii. 10; Gal. iii. 10). The former is imperishable, the latter perishes. But the Jews (and Jewish Christians) fail to perceive that the Mosaic service of the Law was destined from the first to cease. The veil upon the face of Moses (Exod. xxiv. 17, xxxiv. 29—35) hindered them, as it were, from seeing the end of that which was only destined to be for a time ("which ceases").

7. [*Written*: lit. "in letters," or according to some MSS. "in the letter."] *Was to be done away*: "ceases" [lit. "is (or possibly "was") being done away."]

[8. *Rather*: i.e. "more."]

9. *Be glory*: "have glory."

11. *Is done away*: "ceases" [lit. "is being done away."]

13. *Is abolished*: "ceases" [lit. "is (or possibly "was") being done away."]

14. *Is done away*: "ceases" [lit. "is being done away."]

17. After Christ has laid aside the earthly body of flesh upon the cross, he is again—what he had been from the beginning—altogether spirit, the being from heaven whose very body is a spiritual brilliancy. Comp. 1 Cor. xv. 47.—*That Spirit*: "the spirit."

18. Read, "But now we all, with unveiled face, seeing as in a mirror the glory of the Lord," &c.—*The Spirit of the Lord*: "the Lord who is the Spirit."

## iv. 1—6.

Paul's view of the person of Christ rests upon a revelation of God. Hence it is neither a hidden thing (ver. 3) nor an invention of his own brain (ver. 5, "we preach not ourselves"), as his opponents of the Jewish school in Corinth represented in their accusations against him. For his conversion to Christianity (before Damascus) consisted in this: that "God revealed His Son in him" (Gal. i. 16), i.e. made it plain to him in his own spirit that the Jesus whom he was persecuting was God's Son, God's image, the Man from heaven, the Spirit. The same God who in the beginning of creation said, "Let there be light" (Gen. i. 3), has also kindled a light in his dark heart, so that he might recognize the divine brilliancy in the face of Christ. Therefore Paul does not attempt by secret wily means to win men to his gospel, but by the open declaration of divinely revealed truth he commends himself to the conscience of men in the sight of God.

1, 2. Read, "Wherefore since we have this ministry, according to the mercy that has befallen us, we are not disheartened, but we have renounced the secret shameful things, not going about in knavery nor falsifying the word of God, but by the revelation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

3. *Hide*: "veiled" [as in ch. iii., "the veil," and iii. 18, "unveiled face"].—*Are lost*: "are perishing."

4. *The glorious gospel of Christ*: "the gospel of the glory of Christ."

[5. *Christ Jesus the Lord*: i.e. as Lord.]

6. *To give the light*, &c., should be "for (the purpose of) the clear recognition of the divine glory in the face of Jesus Christ."

## iv. 7—v. 10.

God, therefore, supports Paul as well as the others, and the power of God manifests itself mightily in him even now in deliverance from the dangers of death, to which he has daily been exposed in his apostolic labours (7—12). Still more, when the things that are seen pass away and the toil of this earthly life is



over, will God reveal in him the life of Christ, setting him, in a new body, and all the communities that he has founded, before Christ, to whom all must give an account of all that they have done or left undone when he comes to judgment (iv. 13—v. 10).

10. The life of Paul also, like the life of Christ, presents a continual dying away of all that is finite, natural, and earthly in him.

13. From Ps. cxvi. 10.

[14. *By Jesus*: The best MSS. have "with Jesus."]

v. 1—10. We know that if the tent of this earthly body be destroyed we shall receive the spiritual body of the resurrection, which is reserved for us in heaven. For it may be safely assumed that, when this earthly body perishes, we shall continue to live, not as naked spirits, but clothed again with a body. We could wish, however, that the earthly body might not be destroyed violently by the rude hand of death, but that, surviving till the return of Christ, we might be clothed of him, i.e. transformed without pain from material bodily beings into spiritual heavenly beings (comp. 1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 17). In this earthly body we are oppressed, and we long for the heavenly body. Here we are far from the Lord, as though on a journey; we would rather be at home with the Lord, i.e. we long for his return, when we shall be united with him (upon earth). But at all times, both now when we are still far from him and again on his return, our sole endeavour is to please him.

1. *Were*: "be."

3. Read, "Since we shall indeed be clothed (with a body), and not be found without a body" [lit. naked].

4. *Not for that we would be*: "since we would not be."—*Mortality*: "that which is mortal."

6. *We are absent from the Lord* should be "we are away from the Lord upon a journey."

8. *Present*: "at home" [as in ver. 6].

9. *Present or absent*: "at home or on a journey."

v. 11—vi. 2.

With the conscientiousness of a man who has the judgment of the Lord always before his eyes, not with secret arts and craftiness, as my opponents say (iv. 2), do I labour as an apostle, and

seek to win men to the gospel. God, who sees into the heart, knows this, and I hope that you know it also. In this I do not wish to boast of myself, but only to give you opportunity of answering my opponents, who set their boast in external things, which have nothing to do with the real nature of the Christian, or the essence of the Christian character. They boast of their privileges as Jews, their descent from Abraham, their personal intercourse with Jesus when he tarried upon earth, appearing in a material bodily form. To the Christian these things are worthless, for at his death Jesus put off all that is earthly, fleshly, subject to national limitations, and he is henceforth only the Lord, who is the Spirit. With him we also have died to all that belonged to our physical appearance. The Christian is an entirely new creature. Hence we no longer look for the value of a man in that which he is or was externally (comp. Gal. ii. 6, v. 6, vi. 12, 13, 15). The true significance of the person of Christ himself is found in him not as a Jew, or as the son of David, which he was, but as the life-giving Spirit, which he has been again, since he put off upon the cross the material earthly form in which he was manifested. In the reconciling death of Christ (see note on Rom v. 10) God himself has revealed a new righteousness, which leaves everything Jewish behind. Thus, then, it is Paul's gospel that is in the full sense of the words a message on behalf of Christ, the power of which flows from God himself (ver. 20). But his office as messenger is not simply the office of one who makes a petition (vv. 20, 21), but of one who exhorts, and who is himself a fellow-labourer in the salvation of the Corinthians (vi. 1, 2).

11. *Persuade*: i.e. seek to win.

14. *Constraineth* should be "restraineth."—*Then were all dead*: "then all died."

15. *Died for them and rose again*: "died and rose again for them."

19. *God was in Christ, &c.*, should be "God was reconciling the world unto himself in Christ."

20. *For Christ*: "in Christ's stead."—*Beseech*: "admonish."

21. *Made him to be sin for us*: According to Paul's view, death is the punishment of sin (Rom. vi. 23), and hence the death of Christ must be a punishment for sin, not, however, for his own sin, but vicariously for the sin of others.



vi. 1. Read, "We, therefore, as fellow-labourers, exhort you," &c.

2. From Is. xlix. 8.

vi. 3—10.

The blameless manner in which Paul has exercised his office puts to shame those who slander him (comp. v. 11 sq.).

3. Read, "We give no offence in anything, in order that our ministry may not be slandered."

4. Read, "But in all things show ourselves," &c.

vi. 11—13.

While he has been writing against the Corinthians, the heart of the apostle has been enlarged in love. He would that he could find as wide room in their hearts also.

11. *Unto you* should be "against you."

12, 13. Read, "Ye have wide room [lit. "are not confined"] in us, but ye are narrow in your own hearts. I speak with you as with my own children, that ye may still enlarge yourselves in return."

vi. 14—vii. 1.

This passage is probably an interpolation by a later hand. It destroys the connection. The words *receive us*, i.e. "admit me into your hearts," connect vii. 2 immediately with vi. 13. The passages in the Old Testament on which this section rests are Deut. xxii. 10; Levit. xxvi. 11, 12; Is. lii. 11; Ezek. xi. 17, xx. 34; Zeph. iii. 19, 20; Zech. x. 8; 2 Sam. vii. 8, 14; Jer. xxxi. 9.

14. *Fellowship*: properly "share."

15. *Infidel*: "unbeliever" [same word as in ver. 14].

vii. 2—16.

Joy at the good account which Titus brought from Corinth. The matters referred to are not quite clear, but they are in any case the same as those alluded to in ii. 1—11. It seems that for some time a portion of the community was tempted to show its devotion to Paul by an over-severe treatment of the condemned sinner of 1 Cor. v. 1 sqq.

2. *Corrupted*: "injured."

7. *Your fervent mind toward me*: "your zeal for me."

8—13. Reference to the case of the incestuous step-son (1 Cor v.).

8, 9. *A letter*: "the letter."—*I do not repent*, &c.: "I do not repent. And though I did repent, perceiving that . . . yet now I rejoice; not that ye," &c.

11. *Revenge* should be "punishment."

12. *Our care for you*: "your care for us." [The best MSS. vary between "your care for us" and "your care for yourselves."]—He that did the wrong is the son; he that suffered wrong is the father. Possibly Paul had been accused of demanding the infliction of so severe a penalty upon the son (1 Cor. v. 3—5) out of partiality for the father, who may have belonged to the Pauline party.

## PART II. CH. viii. ix.

### viii.

The apostle begs the Corinthians, in rivalry with the Macedonian communities, to complete abundantly the collection for the poor Christians in Jerusalem that had been begun a year before.

[4. The best MSS. read, "Begging of us with much entreaty the favour and fellowship of the ministry to the saints," i.e. begging to be allowed to share in ministering to the saints.]

5. Read, "And, not as we hoped, they first gave up their own selves," &c.—Out of love to Christ and to me they did more than we could hope for, considering their poverty.

6, 7. *Grace*: "benefit."

7. *Therefore*: "But."—*In utterance*: "in the word."

8. *By commandment*: "as commanding."

9. In his incarnation Christ laid aside the glory which he had from the beginning with God, and walked among us in poverty, in order that we by this poverty might be made rich in heavenly treasures.

10. *To be forward*: "to will."

13. The contribution is not intended to make you poor and the Christians of Jerusalem rich, but to establish a reasonable equality. What you now do for them, they may perhaps do another time for you.

15. From Exod. xvi. 18.

16. The same zeal that I have for you.



17. *Forward* should be “zealous.”—This verse refers to ver. 6. He had to exhort Titus. But no! Titus accepted his exhortation, but he did not require it; he acted from his own impulse.

18. *The brother*, i.e. our brother. Who then was this? Was it actually a brother of Paul by birth? It is scarcely likely, as we hear nothing more of him.—*Whose praise*, &c.: “whose praise in the gospel is throughout all the communities.”

19. *Grace*: “benefit.”—*The same Lord*: “the Lord.”

[21. *Providing* should be “for we provide.”]

22. Here we have another “brother,” also unknown to us, assigned to Titus as companion and assistant in the collection of the money. [If either was actually brother to Paul by birth, it was probably this one whom he calls “our brother,” and not the one whom he speaks of simply as “the brother whose praise,” &c.]—*But now much more diligent upon the great confidence*, &c.: “but now much more diligent. And I have great confidence in you, whether on account of Titus, my partner . . . or our brethren the messengers,” &c.

23. *Messengers*: the same word that is usually rendered “apostles,” but here used in the general sense of messengers or delegates.

#### ix.

5. *Whereof ye had notice*: “that was promised.”

6. Prov. xxii. 8, quoted from the Greek version. [May recall the Greek of Prov. xxii. 8, but can scarcely be said to be quoted from it.]

9. Psalm cxii. 9, from the Greek version.

10. *Both minister . . . and multiply*: “will both minister . . . and multiply.”

13. *Experiment of this ministration*: “this faithful service.”—*For your professed subjection unto*: “for your submissive confession of” [lit. “for the submission of your confession unto”].

### PART III. CH. x.—xiii.

#### x.

Paul's defence of himself against his Judaistic opponents in Corinth.

The apostle declares he is not, as his opponents say, strong only

from a distance in his letters, and weak and cowardly when at hand. On the contrary, he knows that he is in possession of weapons, for the defence of his gospel, which are powerful enough to overthrow everything that lifts itself up against his Christian knowledge. Nor does he, like his opponents, lay vainglorious claim to fields which others have already worked, and intrude himself upon that which is already completed. God himself, and not the apostle's own choice, has determined the limits of his apostolic labours. Corinth lies within these limits which God has set, but he intends, as soon as the state of the Corinthian community is satisfactory in every respect, to proceed yet further, while still adhering to his principle of not cultivating the field that has already been worked by others.

1. With this verse the third division of the Epistle begins. This part is at once seen to be written in a very different strain from that of the two former parts. On this ground the opinion has recently been put forward that these four last chapters formed a separate Epistle, dating between our First and Second Epistles. In support of this view, the beginning of this section has been especially urged. The words, "And I Paul myself," seem to indicate that others (as, for instance, Aquila it might be) had sent a letter to the Corinthians from Ephesus, and that Paul had then added to this a short letter of his own. Still, it is not necessary to suppose that this was the case. The words have a satisfactory meaning without this, inasmuch as at the end of the preceding chapter mention has been made of the many who prayed for the Corinthians and longed after them. Paul then continues, "And I Paul myself exhort you."

4. *Through God*: "before God" [lit. "to God"].

5. *Imaginations*: "machinations" [lit. "calculations"].

6. *And having in a readiness*: "and being ready."—Paul intends to punish the disobedience of the Judaistic intruders as soon as the community itself has been brought back to complete obedience to him.

15. *Having hope, &c.*: "having hope, that when your faith is increased in you, we, in accordance with our rule, shall proceed further [lit. "be enlarged abundantly"] to preach the gospel," &c.

16. *In another man's line* should be "according to the rule of other men."



## xi.

Though Paul regards boasting as folly, yet the slanders of his opponents have compelled him to bring forward the points in which he himself excels. He does this in eloquent language, mingled with bitterness and irony. First he reminds them again how he laboured as an apostle without recompense in Corinth, whereas his opponents enslave and rob the community. Then he shows that he has all the advantages of which they boast, and in addition has laboured and suffered much more than they all.

1. [*Bear with me a little in my folly*: Some of the best MSS. read, "Bear a little folly from me."]—*Bear with me*: "ye do bear with me."

2. *To one husband*: i.e. to Christ as the bridegroom. Paul regards the community as the bride, and himself as the one who obtains the bride for the bridegroom.

4. *He that cometh*: The Jewish-Christian opponents announced the coming of some one of special importance from Jerusalem, probably one of the twelve.—*Ye might well bear with him*: This is ironical, and not to be taken seriously, as though he really meant that they should quietly accept the gospel of a Peter or a James. Otherwise it would be in direct contradiction to all that we know from Paul's Epistles of the relation of his gospel to that of the first apostles.

5. *Was not*: "am not" [lit. "have not been"].

[7. *Freely*: i.e. without payment.]

12. *From them which, &c.*: "from them which desire occasion to boast that they are even as we." [Some commentators adopt this or some similar rendering, and the sense suits the context, but it is very doubtful if the Greek will bear such a meaning.]

14. *Is transformed*: "transforms himself."

15. *Be transformed*: "transform themselves."

16—21. Boasting is not of the Lord indeed; it is folly; but since others boast in order to disparage him, they compel him to fall into the same folly. The Corinthians bear with fools gladly. They put up with it when any one enslaves them and fleeces them, and Paul ironically declares that he really feels quite ashamed that he did not behave to them in the same shameless manner.

16. *I*: "I also."

20. *Take of you*: "take you" [lit. simply "take," so that it may refer either to taking their property or to catching them as in a snare].

21. Read, "To my disgrace I say that we have been weak. Howbeit," &c.

24. According to Deut. xxv. 3, an evil doer was not to have more than forty blows of the stick. In order not to transgress the Law by miscounting, it was the custom of the later Jewish courts to inflict only thirty-nine.

25. Comp. Acts xiv. 19, xvi. 22, xxvii. 41. [Any reference to this shipwreck on the voyage to Rome must have been added by a later hand.]

28. "And besides all the rest, the daily crowding upon me and the care of all the communities."

32. See note on Acts ix. 24 sq.

## xii.

[1. The Vatican MS. reads, "I must glory. It is not expedient, indeed, but I shall even come to visions and revelations of the Lord."]

2—5. Paul, speaking of himself in the third person, now relates a personal experience of his own. He thought that he was carried away into the third heaven (the Jews were accustomed to distinguish seven heavens) and into the upper paradise (comp. Rev. ii. 7; in Luke xxiii. 43, what is meant is the lower paradise, the dwelling-place of the righteous in the lower world).

2, 3. *I knew*: "I know."—*I cannot tell*: "I know not."

4. *Lawful*: "possible."

6. *Heareth of me*: "heareth from me."

7—10. No doubt what is here described is a painful sickness, the exact nature of which cannot now be determined. Probably Paul was subject to attacks of epilepsy.

[9. *My before strength* not in the best MSS.]

[11. *In glorying* not in the best MSS.]

12. Paul appeals here to the miracles of the apostolic age, which, he says, were performed by him as well as others. Unfortunately, he gives no examples. We can see, however, from his Epistles what he reckoned as such, e.g. surprising cures of sickness (1 Cor. xii. 9), and no doubt also extraordinary conver-



sions, powerful manifestations of his apostolic authority over the rebellious, acts such as are frequently found in connection with troubled times or powerful characters. The only example by which we could have tested the miraculous power of the apostle—the attempt to inflict sickness upon a sinner by the power of the spirit of Christ working in him and the community which he had founded, together—was, as is well known, frustrated by the discretion of the community (1 Cor. v.), and the unsuccessful attempt brought reproaches and pain enough upon him. This is one of the things that makes Paul's Epistles so extremely instructive to us, that they enable us to see into the entirely natural course of the early history of Christianity and of those contests and struggles which form an epoch in the history of the world. We find in them no other mention of miracles performed by men, nor of miracles performed by God upon men. The men who move upon this stage contend not by means of miracles (as is the case, for instance, in Acts v., xiii. 6 sq.), but with all the means of reasonable demonstration, often indeed with means that are only too human. We find great deliverances from mortal danger (2 Cor. i.), but no miraculous release from prison by means of earthquakes or angels. When Paul, therefore, speaks here of signs and wonders and mighty deeds of an apostle, they are no doubt things that appeared miraculous to that age, but which would be explained to us, if we had examples of them before us, by the natural laws of the spiritual life of man.

14. *The third time I am ready to come to you:* "I am ready to come to you a third time."

15. *For you* should be "for your souls."

16—18. These verses refer to the charge of his opponents (ver. 16), that if he did not plunder the Corinthians himself, he did so craftily by means of his emissaries.—*Nevertheless:* "but."

18. *A brother* should be "the brother."

19. *Again think ye:* "do ye again think?" [but some of the best MSS. read, "Ye have long thought"].

### xiii.

2. Read, "I have told you before, and I tell you before, as when I was present the second time, so now being absent, to them which heretofore," &c.—Here it is assumed that Paul had

visited the Corinthians once during the period of his residence in Ephesus. The Book of Acts passes over this journey (see note on Acts xix. 10).

4. "For though he was crucified in [lit. "from"] weakness, yet he liveth in [lit. "from"] the power of God. And though we also are weak in him, yet we live [properly, "shall live"] in him, in [lit. "from"] the power of God among [lit. "unto"] you."

[5, 6, 7. *Reprobates*: spurious or not genuine; lit. that which will not stand testing.]

7—10. I pray God that ye do what is good. This wish of mine does not proceed from any self-satisfied intention of showing how powerful my influence over you is, but from unselfish joy in that which is good, and in the truth, even though it deprive me of the opportunity of showing my apostolic power of punishment in you. I will gladly appear weak if only you are strong. I am concerned not with myself, but with your moral perfection.

11—14. Final exhortation, summing up, as it were, the substance of the whole Epistle (ver. 11), and benediction.

11. *Farewell*: "rejoice."—*Be of good comfort*: "comfort one another" [better, "exhort one another"].

14. This is the only place where we find the complete three-fold conclusion which, in conjunction with Matt. xxviii. 19, has given occasion to the ecclesiastical doctrine of the Trinity. Among the three powers by which the blessing is conferred, the grace of Christ is placed first, because it is only this that can make the believers participators in the love of God and in a share of the grace-giving influences of the Spirit.



## THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

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THE Epistle which from the early days of the Christian Church has borne the superscription, "To the Galatians," was addressed by Paul (Gal. v. 2) to the "Communities of Galatia" (i. 2). Where these communities were, and of whom they consisted, is doubtful.

The Book of Acts (xvi. 6) does not tell us that Paul, when he passed through the "district of Galatia," on his second missionary journey (A.D. 53), preached the gospel and founded Christian communities there. But neither does it exclude this supposition. Hence the majority of commentators place the "communities of Galatia" in this "district of Galatia." It lay in the heart of Asia Minor, on either side of the middle portion of the river Halys. Its origin and name are connected with the wanderings of three tribes, closely resembling one another in language, manners, and customs, the Trocmi, the Tectosages, and the Tolistoboi. On one of the warlike expeditions from west to east, made by the tribes dwelling north of the Alps, who were all known to the ancients by the common name of Celts, or, in a later form of the word, Galatians, these three tribes had separated themselves from the main body of the expedition, passed through Thrace to Asia Minor, and received from Nicomedes, king of Bythinia, a portion of Phrygia in payment for military service. They had then subsequently increased their territory by various warlike incursions; but Attalus, king of Pergamus, had restricted them again to the district about the Halys (B.C. 240). Mixed with Greek-speaking tribes, they had added the Greek language to their own, and were called Galatians or Gallo-græci, and their country Galatia

or Gallo-græcia. The country contained three cities: Ancyra, the city of the Tectosages, in the middle; Tavium, the city of the Trocmi, to the east; and Pessinus, the city of the Tolistoboi, to the west. It is probable that Jews settled in these commercial cities, and it may be presumed that it was these cities which afterwards became the seat of the "communities of Galatia."

In the year 189 B.C. the Romans subdued the Galatians, but allowed them at first to retain their own internal arrangements and their princes, to whom they gave the name of "king." In the time of king Amyntas the triumvir Marc Antony united with this "district of Galatia" Pisidia and parts of Pamphylia and Lycaonia. On the death of the king the whole of this territory was formed by the emperor Augustus into the Roman "province of Galatia" (B.C. 26).

Jerome, one of the Christian Fathers (A.D. 340—420), speaks from his own observation of the similarity in sound between the popular speech of the Galatians and that of the Treviri in the neighbourhood of Treves. As these Treviri were probably a German tribe on the left bank of the Rhine, this statement of Jerome's has given rise to a dispute which is still unsettled—whether the Galatians were Celts or Germans. The name of Celt would not decide the question, for it dates from the third century B.C., when the ancients did not accurately distinguish between the different nations to the north of the Alps. Philologists have concluded from certain words that have been preserved, that the Treviri were of Celtic origin. The facts handed down to us regarding them, however, whether of language, morals, or customs, favour the supposition of a Germanic origin. And what Paul himself indicates in regard to the religion of the Galatians (Gal. iv. 9, comp. iv. 3), viz. that it was a worship of nature without images, with festivals and observances determined by the stars, and the life of nature, is not inconsistent with this supposition. If this be the case, then the Galatians would be the first Christians of German race.

Other commentators look for the "communities of Galatia"



not in the district, but in the Roman "province of Galatia," viz. in the communities of Pisidian Antioch, and of Iconium Lystra and Derbe in Lycaonia, which Paul founded upon his first missionary journey (A.D. 39—53) (Acts xiii. xiv.; Gal. i. 21). This supposition is possible, inasmuch as Paul elsewhere makes use of the names of provinces of the Roman empire (Gal. i. 21, i. 17; 2 Cor. i. 8, ix. 2, xi. 9, 10), and so in Gal. i. 2 he may have meant the "Roman province of Galatia;" and the communities mentioned in Acts xiii. xiv. actually lay in the province of Galatia. But the arguments in favour of this supposition have not hitherto decidedly preponderated over the arguments on the other side; and it is more probable that the Galatian communities, as is indicated in the Book of Acts itself (xvi. 6, xviii. 23), were situated in the district of Galatia, and were founded on the second missionary journey (Acts xvi. 6).

These communities were founded by Paul himself by the preaching of the gospel (Gal. iv. 12—20, i. 8, 9). We may infer from the Epistle that Paul had been twice in Galatia before it was written, and that on the occasion of his second visit he found the communities had already been disturbed by the operations of Jewish Christians. It is only on this supposition that we can explain such passages as i. 9, v. 3, iv. 16, 18, 19. In this case iv. 13 will refer to his first residence there and the founding of the communities by oral preaching. This agrees with Acts xvi. 6, xviii. 23. According to the Book of Acts, Paul was twice in Galatia, and on his second visit he had to strengthen and confirm a community already in existence. According to the Book of Acts, again, this community was founded on the second missionary journey which Paul undertook from Antioch, probably in the spring of the year 53 A.D. (Acts xv. 35, 36 sq.). Properly understood, Gal. iv. 13 informs us that it was not Paul's intention at that time to preach in Galatia, but a "weakness of the flesh" (see note on iv. 13) was the cause of his doing so.

There are passages in the Epistle which show us plainly that he turned his attention here to the Gentiles. The Galatians

were not circumcised (v. 2). It was the Jewish-Christian opponents of Paul, who afterwards appeared, that first attempted to carry out circumcision (vi. 12, 13, comp. iii. 3). Until Paul preached among them, the Galatians had not known the true God; and hence they were not converts to Judaism or proselytes from among the Gentiles. Certain isolated and obscure passages, from which the attempt has been made, with some success, to prove that there was one section of the community which was originally Jewish, really require a different interpretation (iii. 13, 14, 23—25, iv. 3).

Paul preached to the Galatians, as to the Gentiles of Corinth, his gospel to the Gentiles, i.e. Jesus Christ, and him crucified (Gal. iii. 1; 1 Cor. ii. 2, i. 23). He declared the true God, who in His grace had sent Christ, His Son, from heaven (Gal. iv. 4), in order that, being born of a woman and appearing in the flesh (iv. 4) as Christ Jesus, he might die *the death of the cross* for the sins of men, in execution of the divine plan of salvation (i. 4), and in order that, himself taking upon himself the curse of sin (iii. 13), he might deliver men from the present evil age (i. 4); the God who in His free grace had called the Gentiles also to the kingdom of the Messiah, and to share its possessions (i. 6, v. 8), if in faith in the redeeming death of Christ proclaimed in the gospel, they would seize this grace of God unto their righteousness (v. 2—6).

The result surpassed all expectation. The "weakness of the flesh," of which Paul speaks (iv. 14), might have tempted the Galatians to reject him, perhaps even as one possessed and tormented by an angel of Satan (2 Cor. xii. 7). Instead of this, however, they received him as a messenger of God, yea, even as their Saviour Christ Jesus himself, and esteemed themselves blessed in receiving his good tidings (iv. 14, 15). They believed, and in consequence of their faith God gave them the Holy Spirit, and this new Spirit of life worked miraculous powers in them (iii. 2—5), and as a proof of its presence caused them in ecstatic prayer to cry, as sons, "Abba, Father" (iv. 6).



But this fair life in faith did not last. When Paul, upon his third missionary journey from Antioch (probably towards the close of the summer in the year 55 A.D.), came a second time to Galatia (Acts xviii. 22, 23), he found the faith of the communities had been disturbed by the operations of Jewish Christians. It is only on this supposition that we can satisfactorily explain certain passages (i. 9, iv. 16—20, v. 3, and probably v. 21), the contents of which cannot be referred to the first visit. How far the disturbance succeeded at that time can scarcely be determined from the Epistle. It is clear, however, that the Jewish Christians had preached a different gospel (i. 9), and that circumcision had been insisted upon (v. 3). Instances of the appearance of immoral conduct among the members of the community may have been made use of to prove to the Galatians the necessity of submission to the Mosaic Law (v. 19—21). The earnest way in which Paul speaks (iv. 20, i. 9) shows that the Galatians had not refused to listen to the Jewish-Christian agitators. But this earnestness bore good fruit, and the Galatians returned to their zeal for him and his gospel (iv. 18). Their faith seemed to be entering again upon a satisfactory course (v. 7), so that a second lapse of the Galatians from his gospel filled Paul with astonishment (i. 6).

But the new zeal of the Galatians seems only to have been kindled again under the personal influence of Paul, which everywhere swayed the minds of men so long as he was present, and not in consequence of the conviction of the truth of his preaching. After Paul's departure, they lent only too willing an ear to the renewed Jewish-Christian manipulations of the gospel. They allowed themselves to be talked over (v. 8), yea, to be bewitched—so void of understanding were they—in a way that was quite unintelligible to Paul, who had pictured Jesus Christ, the Crucified, to them, so that they seemed actually to see him with their own eyes (iii. 1). Yet, after all, at the time when Paul wrote, their fall was not complete. It is true that the progress of their religious life had been checked (v. 7), and Paul

is afraid that he has bestowed labour upon them in vain (iv. 11), and that the Spirit of God has been given to them to no purpose (iii. 3); but the Galatians had not yet been circumcised (v. 2, vi. 13); Paul still has confidence that they will not be otherwise minded (v. 10); their consciences have, so far, only been disturbed and perplexed (v. 10, i. 7). They may have joined in such observances as the keeping of the special days of Jewish worship in Jewish fashion (iv. 10), but nothing more than that.

The Epistle to the Galatians must have been written soon after receiving the news of this second lapse, in the first feeling of deep excitement, for the early part of the Epistle is full of passionate displeasure and regret (i. 6, iii. 1), and it is only gradually that this is replaced by expressions of a milder mood towards the community (iv. 12—20), while the indignation against the agitators increases (v. 7—12, vi. 12, 13).

The Epistle itself discloses to us the nature of these agitators, and hence the hypotheses which are required for its own interpretation.

Certain persons had brought to the Galatians a "second gospel" (i. 6, comp. 2 Cor. xi. 4), which Paul calls a *perversion* of his gospel of Christ (i. 7), and had thereby troubled the consciences of the Galatians (i. 7, v. 10).

It was a question, therefore, of fundamental opposition between two forms of the gospel. And since the other gospel can originally have proceeded only from the first Apostles, this was a question, indirectly at any rate, of opposition between the Apostle Paul and the first Apostles.

Now we know from Paul himself that the same *facts* underlay both of these two opposite forms of the gospel, viz. the death and the resurrection of Jesus as the Messiah; and that the fact of his death had on the whole the same spiritual meaning with Paul as with the first Apostles, viz. that it was a death "for our sins," according to the Holy Scripture (1 Cor. xv. 11, 3, 4). But the *conclusions* which the deep-thinking mind of Paul drew from this interpretation of the fact of the death upon the cross, and



which then by a kind of reaction caused the fact itself to appear in a different light, transformed his gospel into a different one from that of the first Apostles.

In what Paul calls a revelation of the Son of God in him (Gal. i. 16, 18), his mind, pursuing a regular line of thought, interprets the death of the Messiah upon the cross in accordance with the religious system of a Jew. Every fact which occurs upon earth is determined by the *divine* omnipotence, and is therefore essentially a *revelation* of the *divine* will. Even the fact of the crucifixion of the Messiah is the act of *God*, and not of men, and consequently reveals the divine *plan and purpose of salvation*. Now, according to the Jewish view, death is the penalty for sin. Consequently even the death of the Messiah was a punishment for sin. But the Messiah is the sinless One. Hence the death of the Messiah was not a punishment for his own sin. Therefore it was a punishment for the sin of men, and, consequently, a vicarious death for the sin of men. Thus the death of the Messiah falls under the definition of a vicarious sacrificial death of reconciliation for sin. But in the sacrifice of reconciliation, according to the Jewish view, God of His own grace forgives the sinner his sin, in spite of his sin, on account of the sacrifice and not on account of his own act; and He forgives him on the ground of faith in the sin-forgiving omnipotent grace of God, and not on the ground of the fulfilment of the divine will in the Law; and in this forgiveness God declares the sinner righteous, in spite of his sin, not indeed actually and in regard to the sinner's own consciousness, but for God and for the sake of the sacrifice and the faith. If this is the spiritual meaning of the fact of the death of the Messiah upon the cross, then, as the act of the divine will, it is the practical revelation of a *new* divine plan of salvation as opposed to the will of God revealed in the Mosaic Law. For in the Law the righteousness of the Jew depends upon the man's own actual fulfilment of the divine will in the works of the Law, and is the payment given by the justice of God for the man's own act. But if the death of

the Messiah upon the cross is the revelation of the *new* divine plan of salvation, then by this death of Christ and the righteousness imputed by God, the Law of Moses and the self-earned actual righteousness as a means of salvation are done away with, the national limitation of salvation to the Jewish people is done away with, and the righteousness of faith which is of the grace of God, for the sake of the death of the Messiah, opens the way to salvation to the Gentiles as to the Jews, and this without the condition of the fulfilment of the Mosaic Law, and admission to the Jewish nationality by circumcision.

This was the substance of the Pauline "Gospel of Christ" (Gal. i. 7), the gospel of Jesus Christ, and him crucified (1 Cor. ii. 2)—the simple result of Paul's attempt to comprehend spiritually the fact of the death of the Messiah upon the cross, and his success in comprehending it under a logical sequence of thought by means of the application of the Jewish system and Jewish ideas to the fact itself. And it was this gospel of Jesus Christ the crucified that Paul had proclaimed to the Galatians also (iii. 1), thus giving to them, as Gentiles, free admission unto salvation in Christ.

From the Epistle we are further able to learn also the substance of the "second and different gospel," and the truth of Paul's sentence upon it, that it was a perversion of his gospel.

According to the statement of Gal. v. 11 (comp. vi. 12), the crucifixion of Christ, which to him was the divinely-appointed act of salvation and the culmination of the whole Messianic work of salvation, was to the disturbers a stumbling-block and an offence to the religious feelings. And from this fact we may imagine what was the nature of the opposition between the gospel of Paul and the other gospel of the disturbers of his communities.

The further development of the Apostle's subject (iii. 1—iv. 7) shows us that these disturbers claimed the promises of God and the blessings of the Messianic kingdom for the "seed of Abraham" alone, in the natural and not in the spiritual sense, i.e. for



the Jewish people as the true people of God according to the promise. While Paul, upon the ground of the death of Christ upon the cross, proclaimed the abolition of the distinction between Jews and Gentiles, and so the beginning of a new community of those who had been freely called by the grace of God both from among Jews and Gentiles (v. 6, vi. 15), the disturbers clung to the Old Testament privileges of the Jews as the only authorized heirs of the promises of God. Hence in their gospel they were of course compelled to ascribe to the work of the Messiah, to the gospel of the Messiah and to the Messiah himself, a national significance, and not the universal human significance ascribed to them by Paul. And with logical consistency they required that the Gentiles should be circumcised if they would be joint heirs of the promise (v. 2, vi. 13). They had no desire at all to exclude the Gentiles from the Messianic kingdom; for the admission of the Gentiles into the people of God was a part of the Old Testament promise, and a necessary consequence of the Old Testament view of the one God, who also required one divine community. They saw the realization of this unity, however, not as Paul did, in the abolition of the distinction between Jew and Gentile in a new creation (vi. 15, 16), i.e. in a community of believers called by the grace of God independently of Judaism or heathenism; but they saw this unity realized in the conversion of the Gentiles into Jews, and the acceptance by them of circumcision, the distinctive mark of the Jewish people.

But if the cross of Christ, in the Pauline sense, was a religious offence to the disturbers of the community, then it followed that in their gospel faith could not mean the same thing that it did in the Pauline gospel. The new principle of righteousness imputed by God, deduced from the death of Christ as a practical revelation of the divine plan of salvation, not being accepted, faith could not be regarded as *the sole ground* of this righteousness, there could not be the corresponding opposition between faith and works of the Law, nor was there any ground for

the abolition of the righteousness of the Law and of the Law itself. But if the Law and self-righteousness in the Law were retained *together with* faith in Jesus Christ, then the importance of faith could consist only in this, that it was *the sole means* of attaining the perfect righteousness of the Law (ii. 16, "by means of faith"), while righteousness itself could only be attained by the actual fulfilment of the Law. This is one reason why the gospel of the disturbers retained the Law. The other reason is, that if, in consequence of the non-acknowledgment of the Pauline meaning of the death of Christ upon the cross, the disturbers did not regard Judaism as abolished, then neither was the Mosaic Law as an eternally valid revelation of God abolished. These two reasons compelled the disturbers to force the Gentile Christians of Galatia to submit not only to circumcision, but also to the Law (v. 4, 13—24).

Thus we see how from the death of Christ upon the cross were developed two forms of the gospel, according as it was made either simply *an essential point* or *the sole principle* of the gospel. The one form was strictly national, and retained Judaism together with faith in the Messiah. The other form was universal, and abolished the distinction between Jew and Gentile in faith in the Messiah. And we have every reason to suppose that that "second and different gospel," which the disturbers of the Galatian community introduced, was substantially one and the same with the preaching to the circumcision, as the bearer and Apostle of which Peter is named by Paul (Gal. ii. 7). Probably, however, the disturbers had drawn from the gospel of Peter conclusions which he himself had not drawn, so that in their mouth this gospel was more Jewish than in the mouth of Peter himself.

But if the gospel of the disturbers was a Jewish and national gospel, they themselves must have been believers from among the Jews in whom the national religious spirit still retained its full strength. Hence Paul calls them the circumcised, or Jews (vi. 13). It is not clear from the Epistle whence they came. As, however, there is no trace in it of their having proceeded



from the Galatian community itself, it may naturally be supposed that they came from without, and that they were not improbably "intruders" from Jerusalem, the centre of the national Jewish Christianity, who had forced their way into the Gentile community, like the intruders from Jerusalem in the Gentile-Christian communities of Syria and Cilicia (ii. 4), or the emissaries from Jerusalem to Antioch (ii. 12), whom Paul mentions in the Epistle. If the words, "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (v. 9), refer to the disturbers, there were not many of them. Whether the person of special importance mentioned in the following verse (v. 10) was one of them or not must remain undetermined. This might be some one in whose name or authority the disturbers appeared, or pretended to appear, in Galatia, as the Jewish-Christian emissaries in Antioch appeared under the name and authority of James, perhaps some one occupying a prominent position among the Apostles in the mother community, such as James or Peter.

In order to win the Galatians to their own gospel, the Jewish Christians had first to attack the gospel of Paul. The form of this attack may be gathered from the Epistle.

The peculiar manner in which Paul in his decisive exposition (iii. 1—29) draws from the Scriptures and refers to the Scriptures, i.e. the divine word of the Old Testament revelation, all the arguments by which he *confutes* the arguments of the disturbers, shows that they themselves attacked Paul's gospel upon the ground of the divine word of Scripture, i.e. on the ground of the *historical* revelation. And this attack would be all the more effective inasmuch as Paul, and the Galatians with him, themselves acknowledged the Scripture of the Old Covenant as a revelation of God and the divine truth. The disturbers, therefore, urged the contradiction between Paul's gospel and the *historical* religious consciousness which had been developed, upon the ground of the historical divine word of Scripture in accordance with traditional historical interpretation. They maintained that according to the Scripture the promises of God, for the

fulfilment of which the Messiah had been sent, were given to the seed of Abraham, i.e. the Jewish nation, God's people of the circumcision, and were destined for it alone, and that, therefore, the Gentiles could only become joint-heirs of these promises by becoming Jews, and of the seed of Abraham, by circumcision. This was supported by the Scripture in its natural and acknowledged sense. The Scripture, even when spiritually understood, knew the Messiah and his work only in the national sense as the perfecting of Judaism. Of an abolition of Judaism and Heathenism alike, to make room for a *new* divine community of those who were called from the whole human race by the free grace of God, there was not a word in the Scripture *according to the popular interpretation*. In this sense the assertion of the Jewish Christians that the believing Gentiles could only be made perfect by circumcision (iii. 3) was altogether scriptural.

Besides this, there was another thing in Paul's gospel that the Jewish Christians in Galatia disputed, viz. the abolition of the Law. For Paul, the crucifixion of the Messiah as a practical revelation of a new means of salvation involved the abolition of the Law of Moses as a means of salvation. But the Law was a means of salvation only as a source of a holy life. Hence if abolished as a means of salvation, it was also abolished as a moral law of life. And indeed, according to Paul's view, it was, as an external letter, incapable of creating within man the strength for moral action and for the performance of that which is good. Moral action is the result solely of the divine Spirit within, given to man in virtue of his faith, by which the believer is urged from within to the outward performance of that which is good (v. 18 sq.). The Law has thus become superfluous even for the moral life of believers. But this lawless freedom of the Pauline gospel to the Gentiles was an offence to the moral and religious consciousness of the Jewish Christians. Without the check of the Law, this liberty appeared to them to be simply a means and occasion for the sinful flesh (v. 13), a riotous letting loose of all the sinful lusts of the flesh. And the Jewish-Christian dis-



turbers adhered to the Law, not only as the means of salvation for the righteousness which is of man's own act, but also as the fundamental rule of life for the righteousness of moral action itself.

But the disturbers questioned not only the truth of the *substance* of Paul's gospel, but also the genuineness of its *source*. The relation of Paul to Jesus, to the Twelve, and to his own gospel, offered easy points of attack. It certainly was a strange thing that a man who had had no personal intercourse with the Messiah, who had never been appointed an Apostle by him, who, on the contrary, had passionately persecuted the community of the Messiah, should suddenly appear as an Apostle of the Messiah, without any practical agency appearing which could have explained the change, and should appear with a gospel which had nothing in common with the gospel of the Messianic Apostles beyond the fact of the death and resurrection; for in all other respects the contents of Paul's gospel were different from those of the disciples who had been most peculiarly Jesus' own, the conclusions which Paul drew from these facts being altogether unknown to them. Again, while these latter had, as a fact, received their gospel directly from the living Messiah himself, Paul had nothing to show but his own personal assurances that he had received his gospel by a direct but inward spiritual revelation, a revelation of the same Messiah, but now risen and dwelling in heaven (i. 12). On the other hand, the Jewish-Christian disturbers urgently maintained the sole right of the Twelve to be Apostles of the Messiah in Galatia as well as elsewhere, in virtue of their past history (ii. 6, whatever they *were*), i.e. in virtue of their actual immediate intercourse with the living Messiah and their actual direct election by him. That, in the primitive community, was the ground on which they were recognized as something special, the only sure witnesses, namely, of the works and words, the life, death, and resurrection of the Messiah (ii. 2, 6, 9, comp. Acts i. 22). They thus denied the apostolic authority of Paul, and the authority of

his gospel at the same time. They demanded that Paul should be made subordinate to the Twelve, and his gospel to theirs (ii. 5, 4). According to ch. i. properly understood, the disturbers denied the inner spiritual revelation, which was to Paul the source of his gospel, and in so doing they denied the divine origin, and hence the divine authority and truth, of the gospel itself; and, as a logical consequence of this, they referred it to a human source, and asserted that it had been delivered to him and taught to him by men (i. 11, 12, comp. i. 10). It may be presumed that they availed themselves of the fact that he resided fifteen days in Jerusalem with the Twelve after his asserted conversion (i. 18, 19), in order to make this reference of it to a human source probable and credible to the Galatians. And doubtless the disturbers themselves were really convinced that Paul's gospel had been delivered to him by the Twelve in so far as it agreed with their gospel, and was his own error, a preaching of himself (2 Cor. iv. 5), where it contradicted it. Only on this supposition can we understand Paul's solemn assurance that when he was in Jerusalem he saw only Peter and James, from whom, as the representatives of the "other" gospel, he could not have received his own; only thus can we understand the unique assertion of his apostolic authority, viz. that he had been appointed an Apostle not of men, nor by means of a man, i.e. neither directly by the Twelve, nor by God by means of the Twelve.

The disturbers endeavoured to win over the Galatians to their gospel, not only by disputing the authority of Paul, but also by skilful treatment of them in other ways. They attempted to persuade them (iii. 3) that faith, resting upon the Pauline preaching, might indeed be the beginning, but was imperfect; while circumcision was the end which made all complete. Possibly they made use of the well-known distinction between the uncircumcised Gentile adherents of Judaism (the "proselytes of the gate," as they were called), who were only half citizens and half partakers of the possessions of the people of God, and the circum-



cised adherents (the "proselytes of righteousness"), who were full citizens, in order to coax the Galatians to submit to circumcision. It was represented to the Galatians that Paul, who restrained them from being circumcised, was their enemy, depriving them of their full rights as citizens of the Messianic kingdom (iv. 16), and that the zeal for the circumcision of the Gentiles was a genuine zeal to secure to them their full citizenship (iv. 17). In order to excite the zeal of the Galatians the more, they were threatened with exclusion from the kingdom of God and from the possessions of the Messianic kingdom (iv. 17); and as the Pauline gospel possessed considerable attractions for inferior minds, because of its promise of righteousness and life to the sinner in spite of his sin, as a gift of grace, it was asserted that this grace was not lost by circumcision, inasmuch as circumcision did not bind a man to the actual fulfilment of the Law and to righteousness by his own works (v. 3, 4, vi. 13). Generally speaking, it was not the serious aspect of the Law, the necessity of making life holy, which was urged, but the brighter aspect of the pleasant worship. The Galatians were urged at first simply to observe the Jewish festivals (iv. 10).

Upon this insincerity in the attitude of the Jewish-Christian disturbers, Paul founds the crushing sentence which he passes upon them (vi. 12, 13). In their insistence upon the circumcision of the Gentile Christians he perceives only the spirit of impiety, directed against the will of God, which instead of revering the death of the Messiah upon the cross as the highest expression of the divine saving will, only rejects it as a persecuting offence; and which, therefore, being unable to escape the fact itself, labours at least to counteract its effects, and put a stop to the existence of uncircumcised Gentile communities. In their insistence upon the circumcision of the Gentile Christians he sees only vanity, puffed up with the supposed superiority of the Jewish nation, determined in outward semblance at any rate to preserve the fair appearance of a member of the still privileged Jewish people of God, sees only the force of a selfish

pursuit of the empty boast of the Jewish people, devoid of all moral purpose, and in the circumcision of the Gentile Christians seeking only to gratify its own proud feeling that the Gentiles acknowledge the privileges of the Jewish nation.

The one-sided severity of this sentence must not be overlooked. Paul's gospel was a new creation of the Spirit, resulting from a one-sided conception of the death of Christ upon the cross as the act of the divine saving will and the divine revelation of a new way of salvation. This conception entirely set aside both the words and deeds of the actual life of Jesus; and the gospel which proceeded from it was a breach with the historical religious tradition of the Jewish people (2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15). This gospel, inconsistent with the natural and traditional meaning of Scripture, could only be brought into agreement with Scripture by means of a "spiritual interpretation," which was practically always a spiritual perversion (iii. 7, 11, 16, iv. 22—30). It differed from, and indeed contradicted, what the Twelve had received from Jesus himself. Jesus had never taught his Apostles that the death upon the cross was a practical revelation of a new way of salvation, nor given them this idea of righteousness as imputed by God to the sinner in spite of his sins. He had never taught them that it is faith alone that justifies, nor that the result of the Messianic work would be to abolish the distinction between Jews and Gentiles in a new divine community. And this gospel was proclaimed by a man who, never having come into personal contact with the living Jesus or been appointed by him as an Apostle, himself solemnly declared that he had received this appointment from God, and from the Messiah enthroned in heaven, by means of a celestial vision (Acts xxvi. 19; comp. 2 Cor. xii. 1; 1 Cor. xv. 8). Thus the breach which the gospel of Paul made with the traditional religious ideas of the Jewish people was so fundamental, and there was so much in it that was strange and surprising, that we can easily explain the opposition of the Jewish Christians to Paul without being obliged to refer it, as



he does, to insincerity and unworthy motives. The disturbers of the Galatians were Jewish Christians, still attached to the national religious ideas, and still moved by national religious sentiments. From this, in which they were perfectly sincere, proceeded in the course of the struggle attempts by no means free from insincerity. They represented a certain authority, viz. the authority of historical tradition. Paul represented what is undoubtedly the higher authority of the Spirit, and the necessity of breaking with a dead form of historical tradition.

Almost the same reasons which provoked the opposition of the Jewish Christians explain also the backsliding of the Galatians. Paul's gospel was a new spiritual revelation, and was founded upon spiritual powers—upon the spiritual power of its own inherent truth—upon the logical necessity by which the Pauline conception of the death of the Messiah upon the cross followed from the assumptions of the Jewish system of religion and philosophy—upon the logical necessity of the conclusions which Paul further drew from this conception—and, above all, upon the personal spiritual power of Paul himself. But then, in the first place, this logical necessity of the Pauline ideas was part and parcel of the Jewish system, which was altogether foreign to the Gentile Christians, and which therefore they could not understand. In the second place, the plain facts were opposed to the logical consequences of this spiritual revelation. Paul proclaimed as the Messiah the same Jesus as the Twelve, and yet he proclaimed a different gospel. The Twelve had enjoyed actual personal intercourse with the living Jesus, had heard his words with their own ears, and were eye-witnesses of his works. Paul had never been in the company of Jesus at all, knew nothing about the living Jesus except from the Twelve who were his disciples, and could only give his own personal assurance that he had received his gospel by the revelation of Jesus. The Twelve had, as a matter of fact, been appointed by the living Jesus to be Apostles of his gospel; Paul could only protest that he had been called to be an Apostle by a heavenly vision. Can

we wonder that the Galatians trusted more to the actual facts than to arguments and protestations?

The process which Paul adopts in the Epistle itself for the defence of his gospel to the Gentiles is simply a refutation of the arguments with which the disturbers attacked his gospel and imposed their own upon the Galatians. This refutation is directed against three points. The Apostle's opponents had denied the direct divine origin of the Pauline gospel, and asserted that it had been communicated to him through human channels and delivered to him by the Twelve. By undeniable facts, Paul shows the impossibility of its having been thus humanly communicated, and hence the reality of its divine origin. The opponents had on scriptural grounds denied the Gentile Christians, who had not the Law and the circumcision, the right to the blessings of the Messianic kingdom, and had claimed them for the circumcised sons of Abraham alone. By means of an exposition of the divine plan of salvation, based upon the word of God in the Scripture, Paul shows that the Gentiles who believe in Christ have this right, without being admitted into the nation of the circumcised sons of Abraham. The opponents, in accordance with this assumption of theirs, had summoned the Galatians to submit to circumcision and the Law. Paul warns the Galatians to stand fast to their freedom from circumcision and the Law.

This explains the form and logical order of the Epistle. At the beginning (i. 1—5) stands the salutation. Even in this Paul emphasizes the divine origin of his apostolic office, and the death of the Messiah upon the cross as the divinely-appointed means of salvation.

Then follows the introduction (i. 6—10), in which Paul adduces the lapse of the Galatians as the occasion of the Epistle, and in asserting that his gospel is divine, not human, states the first proposition which he then proceeds to demonstrate.

In the demonstration of this proposition (i. 11—ii. 21) he shows by the undeniable facts of his relation to the only men from whom he could have received his gospel, the twelve



Apostles, that it is not of human origin. He points out how the revelation of the gospel in him took place far away from the Twelve (i. 13—17); how, three years afterwards, on a short visit to Jerusalem, he only became acquainted with Peter and James, the very men who, as the supporters of the other and different gospel, could not have given him his (i. 18—20); how he first laboured as an Apostle of his gospel far from all contact with the Twelve or any Christians in Judea (i. 21—24); and how, after fourteen years' activity, he had maintained the truth of his gospel to the Gentiles *against* the mother community and the Twelve in Jerusalem (ii. 1—10), and *against* Peter and the emissaries of James in Antioch (ii. 11—21).

Then follows (iii. 1—iv. 7) the refutation of the assertion that the inheritance of the Messianic possessions is attached to circumcision and the Law, and has been promised only to the circumcised sons of Abraham. By way of introduction to this (iii. 1—7), Paul directs the attention of the Galatians to the fact that they did not obtain the Spirit of God, which is the earnest of all the blessings of salvation, by their own act as the result of circumcision and of works of the Law; but that they received it as a gift in consequence of their faith. Thus they are in the same position as Abraham, who also received righteousness, as a divine gift imputed to him, in consequence of his faith. This gives Paul the opportunity of passing on to show that, according to the order declared in the word of God, the divine plan of salvation, both in the antecedent promise to Abraham and in the fulfilment in Christ, made the attainment of the Messianic blessing dependent upon faith, while the Law, which stood between these two, had brought the curse of sin (iii. 8—14). This last assertion, standing in the sharpest opposition to Jewish religious ideas, compels Paul to adopt an argument in which he proves, by an exposition of the historical development of the plan of salvation, that what he asserts to have been the aim of the Law, viz. to bring the curse of sin, really was the divine purpose (iii. 15—24). And then, as the conclusion and result

of his argument, he is able to declare that the believers, without the Law and circumcision, as true sons of Abraham, are also the heirs of the promises (iii. 25—29). In an appendix to this argument (iv. 1—7), he finally gives an answer to the question which necessarily arises from the argument itself, why the period of the Law and of the curse of sin intervened between the antecedent promise in Abraham and the fulfilment in Christ.

Passing on to the next step, he now points out that the Galatians, in their tendency to Judaism, are at variance with the divine plan of salvation which he has just demonstrated (iv. 8—11), in order that he may next proceed to exhort them to remove this inconsistency.

By way of introduction to this exhortation, Paul first appeals to the feelings of the Galatians (iv. 12—20), that he may win back those who have been estranged from him, and then to their understanding (iv. 21—30), in order to enlighten again those who have been befooled by the opponents. By both these means he desires to make the Galatians accessible to his exhortations.

Then follows the exhortation itself to stand fast in liberty from the yoke of Judaism (iv. 31—v. 1).

This exhortation is then strengthened against the delusions and the accusations against their liberty, which had been employed respectively in the attempts to persuade them to submit to circumcision (v. 2—12) and to the Law (v. 13—24).

To this Paul appends some additional exhortations especially required by the peculiar circumstances of the Galatians (v. 25—vi. 10).

Finally, in a kind of postscript written with his own hand in large letters, Paul, in a crushing sentence against his opponents, discloses to the Galatians their true nature and the insincere and ungodly character of their motives, and contrasts with this his own sincere and pious conduct (vi. 11—17); and then he concludes by pronouncing a blessing upon the community (vi. 18).

The date of the letter falls not long after Paul's second visit



to Galatia (i. 6), about the end of the year 55 or the beginning of 56 A.D., some two and a half to three years after the founding of the communities. As Paul went from Galatia to Ephesus (Acts xix. 1), he must have written the Epistle either on the journey thither or in Ephesus itself.

As to the effect of the Epistle we know nothing. The First Epistle to the Corinthians, written in Ephesus shortly before Easter, 58 A.D., mentions the friendly relation between Paul and the Galatians, but that is all.

In the series of the four Epistles of Paul which are universally acknowledged as genuine, the Epistle to the Galatians stands first. It is one of the most important documents in regard to the history of primitive Christianity. It reveals to us more fully than any others the conflict of thought and life which entered the primitive Christian community and the primitive Christian faith upon the appearance of Paul and his gospel. It reveals to us, therefore, more than any other document, that even in the history of primitive Christianity there was no other law than that which works in the history of the present, the law of development from the strife and the reconciliation of opposing forces.

## THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

### i. 1—5. *Introductory Greeting.*

THIS greeting is extended by the introduction of two significant thoughts, in which we already obtain a glimpse, as it were, of the contents of the Epistle. In connection with the mention of the writer, it is emphatically stated that Paul is an apostle *directly* through Jesus Christ and God, like the twelve, and has not, as might be supposed, been appointed by men, i.e. by these first apostles, or by God by means of these men. Either supposition would do away with the independence of Paul, and so with the independence of his gospel in regard to the twelve. In connection with the greeting itself, the act of redemption by the Messiah is introduced, viz. his death upon the cross for the sins of men as the divinely-appointed means of salvation from the present age, which is under the power of sin, the age in which the believers continue to live until that return of Christ which is regarded as close at hand. At the same time, every other channel of salvation, circumcision and law and righteousness which is of the Law, such as the Jewish Christians preach in Galatia, is done away with, as not in accordance with the will of God.

1. Read, "Paul an apostle not from men, nor through the instrumentality of a man, but through the instrumentality of Jesus Christ and of God the Father who had raised him from the dead."

4. *This present evil world*, should be "the present age, which is evil." [*God and our Father*, should be "our God and Father."]

### i. 6—10. *Introduction.*

In the fact of the falling away of the Galatians from his gospel so soon after his departure (p. 258), Paul states the *occasion* of his Epistle (ver. 6), and in the assertion of the divine nature of his gospel (ver. 10) its immediate *contents and subject*.

In a tone of deep displeasure, Paul designates the tendency of



the Galatians to the gospel of the Law, introduced by the Jewish Christians, an apostasy, not from his gospel, but from God, who has called them, the Gentiles, into the "grace of Christ," i.e. into a sphere of life in which the relation between God and man and the attainment of righteousness and life are determined by the grace of Christ, i.e. the grace of Christ which has been revealed in his death upon the cross (see notes on Rom. v. 15—17), and not by the Law of Moses (i. 6). This sphere of life and this relation the Galatians have forsaken, and have fallen away from it to a second gospel, the claim of which to be a revelation of Jesus and God Paul denies in the certainty that his is the revelation of God. It is not another, i.e. it is not a gospel as well as Paul's, but it is only the preaching of "some," i.e. of certain persons, as Paul calls his opponents, who pervert "the gospel of Christ," i.e. the Pauline gospel to the Gentiles (pp. 259 sqq.), from a gospel of the righteousness which is of grace into a gospel of the righteousness which is of circumcision and the Law, and so trouble the consciences of the Galatians, because they refer this gospel to the first apostles and to Jesus. In opposition to this, Paul affirms the divine nature of his gospel (vv. 8, 9), invoking a curse upon all preachers of any other as a testimony to his own inner confidence. This affirmation he establishes upon the divine nature of its contents, and by further maintaining these contents themselves against the disfavour with which it is received by men (ver. 10). "Am I now persuading men or God?" he cries; a peculiar sort of expression, in which the persons stand for that which proceeds from them, men for human tradition and human doctrine (see note on ver. 12), and God for divine revelation and divine truth. "Or am I seeking to please men?" he adds. Do I alter the divine contents of the gospel in order to win the favour of men? On the contrary, from the displeasure of men in his gospel he argues its divine truth; and then he argues that he is a true servant of Christ, from the fact that (Matt. v. 10—12) men hate the truth of God. This is the meaning of the words, "If I *still* pleased men (i.e. after God has revealed to me the divine truth of the gospel), I should not be Christ's servant." For as Christ suffered the hatred of man because he proclaimed God's truth, so *must* Christ's servant if he proclaim the revelation of God.

In this Paul sets forth the main subject of his Epistle (the demonstration of the divine truth of *his* gospel), and points to the special treatment of this matter which immediately follows in the argument that *his* gospel is *not* the word of man nor of human origin (i. 11—24), and that *his* gospel has been maintained by him in its divine truth in the face of the displeasure of men (ii. 1—12).

6. *Another gospel* should be “a second gospel.”

9. *Before*: i.e. when we were formerly with you.

10. *For if, &c.*, should be “If I yet pleased men, I should not be Christ’s servant.”

i. 11—vi. 10. *The actual Theme of the Epistle.*

i. 11—v. 24. *The primary Theme.*

*Defence of Paul’s gospel to the Gentiles against the objections and demands of the Jewish Christians in Galatia.*

i. 11—ii. 21. FIRST PART.

*Proof of the divine origin of the Pauline gospel to the Gentiles.*

In support of this is adduced the demonstration of its non-human channel of communication, and the fact that its independence and truth have been maintained in the face of human opposition.

i. 11—24. *First Subdivision of the First Part.*

*Proof that the Pauline gospel to the Gentiles has not been communicated to him by man, based upon six undeniable facts.*

Paul begins his demonstration of the divine truth of his gospel by demonstrating its divine origin, against the objection of the Jewish Christians that it was not, like that of the twelve, a divine revelation through Jesus Christ. Paul maintains that his gospel also, like that of the twelve, is a *direct revelation* of Jesus Christ and God (i. 12—15). This certainty Paul bases upon the following argument: Every *new* word of salvation in the spirit of man, which cannot be referred to *human* tradition and teaching, is a *revelation of God*. Now Paul was confident that his gospel to the Gentiles, as opposed to the gospel of the twelve, was *new*, and that he had not been convinced of it by having received it and been taught it by man. He was confident that the contents



of his gospel had become a fact of his mental consciousness, in consequence of the fact that Jesus Christ had been spiritually seen of him also as well as of the twelve (1 Cor. xv. 8), and there-upon a spiritual communion between God and himself, spirit with spirit, had arisen (Gal. i. 16). And upon this certainty of the newness of his gospel to the *Gentiles* as a divine revelation, together with the divine approval in the results of his labours, rested the inner certainty that he had been destined by God to be an apostle to the Gentiles, as the twelve to be apostles to the Jews.

The opponents certainly did not deny the novelty of his gospel. On the contrary, it was upon the ground of its novelty, and of its inconsistency with the gospel of the twelve and the divine revelation in the scripture of the Old Covenant, that they maintained that the gospel to the Gentiles was Paul's own wisdom, and that he was preaching himself (2 Cor. iv. 5). In opposition to this, Paul's only *affirmative* argument for his gospel as a divine revelation was his *personal assurance* of the living certainty within him. This was sufficient for those who believed in him and his gospel. But it was not sufficient for unbelievers, or for believers who had become distrustful, like the Galatians. The only proof he could give them must be based upon actual and undeniable *facts*, and so it would only be *negative*, resting upon the demonstration that his gospel was not of human origin. This explains the form of the argument (i. 11—ii. 21).

#### i. 11, 12.

Paul begins his argument by showing that his gospel is *not after man*, i.e. not after the manner of men. It has not arisen as a spiritual subject of human thought which arises by human means, viz. by tradition and the teaching of another human being. He has not received it from the twelve and the primitive community in Jerusalem as the first depositories of the gospel of Jesus.

12. Read, "For neither did *I* receive it (as delivered to me) from a man, nor did I acquire it [lit. nor was I taught it] except by means of a revelation of Jesus Christ."

#### i. 13—24.

*The six facts in proof of the divine nature and origin of Paul's gospel.*

i. 13—16. *The First Fact.*

The first fact is the sudden change from being a passionate zealot for the traditions of the fathers, and persecutor of the community of Jesus, to being as passionate a preacher of his gospel; a change which is only to be explained as a direct interposition of God in Paul's spiritual life. Paul calls himself a "zealot for the traditions of the fathers," because he belonged to the party of the Zealots (comp. Luke vi. 15; Acts i. 13). Their aim was, as the pious party, by means of the strictest observance of the Mosaic Law, together with all the traditional accretions of later times, to make the people of Israel, even by compulsion, a righteous people before Jehovah, and so to extort from Jehovah, as the reward of their righteousness, the realization of the promised kingdom of God. This made them a political party and strongly national, their aim being to overthrow all foreign rule with a view to the realization of this kingdom of God. In the midst of this passionate zeal for Judaism (see Acts viii. 1—3, ix. 1, 2), Paul tells us, it pleased God, according to His almighty will and His free choice, to reveal His Son in *me*, that I might preach him to the Gentiles; and not (as would, humanly speaking, have been more natural) in the twelve, in order that they might preach him to the Gentiles (see p. 285) as to the Jews (ii. 7). Paul thus marks his election to be an apostle to the Gentiles as a special act of the free grace of God (see note on 1 Cor. xv. 10), which had placed him as apostle to the Gentiles by the side of the Jewish apostles, the twelve, and especially Peter, on an equal footing of independence.

13. *Conversation*: "conduct."

14. Read, "And increased in Judaism above many of my own age among my own people, being a zealot beyond measure for the traditions of my fathers."

i. 16, 17. *The Second Fact.*

The second fact was, that immediately after this divine revelation the apostle broke off all spiritual communication with flesh and blood, i.e. with finite man (in distinction from the infinite God, who is Spirit), that is to say, he did not confer with the apostles who were before him in Jerusalem, for it is they whom he means, from whom alone he could at that time have received



instruction concerning the gospel of Jesus. Instead of going to them, Paul went from Damascus, where the revelation took place (Acts ix.), into Arabia. Whither he went in Arabia, or how long he remained there, we do not know ; but the object of his journey we may gather from his own words. If Paul did not hold any communication with finite *men*, the apostles before him, in order to confer with them upon the revelation that had been given to him, then he went into Arabia into the solitude of the wilderness for solitary inner spiritual communion with *God*, that the new revelation communicated to him, which was in absolute contradiction to *his* Old Testament ideas, no less than to those of the apostles, might be formed into a consistent, clear conviction of the newly revealed saving will of God in Christ (see note on 1 Cor. ii. 9). Only when he had regained such a clear conviction of the saving will and the newly revealed divine plan of salvation (see note on 1 Cor. ii. 6 sqq.), could he appear as an apostle. It was not until after this had taken place that he returned to Damascus (see 2 Cor. xi. 32).

i. 18—20. *The Third Fact.*

The third fact was Paul's visit to Peter in Jerusalem, a visit which did not take place until three years after his conversion, when his gospel had long been an established fact of his faith, and the object of which was to make the personal acquaintance of Peter, and not to receive instruction from him. On occasion of this visit, he did not see any other apostle except James the brother of the Lord, one of the pillars of the Church (Gal. ii. 9), the most powerful and thoroughgoing champion of Jewish Christianity (Gal. ii. 12 ; Acts xv.). The truth of this fact he confirms by vehement assurances ; for inasmuch as Peter and James were the supporters of the second form of the gospel, i.e. the Jewish Christian, it was impossible that he should have received his gospel to the Gentiles from them, so that if he had not seen any other apostle he had not received it from the apostles at all.

i. 21. *The Fourth Fact.*

The fourth fact was the journey to Syria and Cilicia, which took place after this visit to Jerusalem. These lay to the north of Palestine in Asia Minor, on the Mediterranean, at a considerable distance, therefore, from Jerusalem and Palestine

where he might still have received instruction in the gospel from men. This was Paul's first missionary journey for the purpose of preaching among the Gentiles, and on this occasion he was the first missionary to the Gentiles. The Book of Acts tells us nothing about this journey (see Acts xii. 24—xiv. 28). It only mentions incidentally (xv. 23) the Gentile communities in Syria and Cilicia.

i. 22, 23. *The Fifth Fact.*

The fifth fact is, that Paul was personally entirely unknown to the Christian communities of Judea at the time of his departure into Syria, so that he had not obtained instruction in the gospel from any Christian out of Jerusalem.

23. *But they had heard only*, should be "They only knew by hearsay."

i. 23, 24. *The Sixth Fact.*

The sixth fact was the acknowledgment by the Jewish Christians in Judea, that a miracle of the divine omnipotence had transformed Paul from a persecutor of the community into a preacher of the faith, and their consequent acknowledgment of the divine origin of his gospel.

ii. *Second Subdivision of the First Part.*

Argument from the fact that the independence and truth of the Pauline gospel to the Gentiles were maintained against adverse human influence.

ii. 1—10.

Argument from the fact that the Pauline gospel is independent of the apostles who are regarded as pillars, and that this independence has been maintained against the mother community in Jerusalem.

Read, "Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus also with me. And I went up in consequence of a revelation, and laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but separately before them that are of reputation, lest I should run or should have run in vain. But not even Titus my companion (in my apostolic labours), although a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. But on account of false brethren who had crept in unawares, who had



made their way in privily to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, in order that they might bring us into bondage—to them we yielded not for an hour by the submission (which they demanded), in order that the truth of the gospel might endure with you. But from them that are in reputation to be something special—what they at one time were matters not to me, as for the outward appearance of a man God regards it not; for to *me* those who were in reputation communicated nothing, but on the contrary when they saw that to me had been entrusted the gospel to the uncircumcision, as to Peter the gospel to the circumcision,—for he who had wrought effectually for Peter in behalf of an apostleship of circumcision, had also wrought effectually for me in behalf of the Gentiles,—and when they had come to know the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who have the reputation of being pillars, then they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, to the end that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision. Only we were to remember the poor, and this very thing I have been zealous practically to carry out.”

In the first verse of this chapter, Paul begins the second division of his argument to which he has already alluded (i. 10). The displeasure of men at his gospel is itself a proof that he is a servant of Christ, and his gospel is divine truth. This displeasure is manifested by the very men from whom alone he could have received his gospel as a tradition of men, viz. the Jewish Christians, the original community in Jerusalem and the first apostles. But it is against them that he has maintained the divine authority and the divine truth of his gospel both in Jerusalem and in Antioch.

The position of affairs was as follows. For fourteen years Paul had preached the gospel to the Gentiles in Syria and Cilicia, i.e. in Gentile lands, leaving to the twelve the land of the twelve tribes as the district appointed to them by God (see Gal. ii. 7, and comp. 2 Cor. x. 13, 14). Doubtless he had hoped to be able to preach in Gentile lands undisturbed by the original Jewish-Christian community. But, under the hypocritical pretence of brotherhood, Jewish Christians from Jerusalem (ii. 4) obtained an entrance by underhand means into his communities. Their object was to spy out the apostolic liberty

and independence of Paul in relation to the twelve (see 1 Cor. ix. 1), and to inquire whether Paul was founding communities on his own account, without submitting himself, and through himself these communities of his, to the twelve and the original community in Jerusalem. It was a question of the *personal* liberty and independence of Paul as an apostle having equal rights and authority with the twelve (comp. 1 Cor. ix. 1). And the object of the false brethren, in endeavouring to force him to submit to the twelve, was to bring the independence and authority of his gospel, which was entirely dependent upon him personally, under the authority of the Jewish-Christian gospel of the twelve, as alone valid (ii. 4, 5). The exertions of these Jewish Christians against Paul were so successful that he feared the overthrow of his past as well as his present and future labours (ii. 2). The situation appears to have been so serious and so painful that it is only by a divine revelation that Paul regains his confidence (ii. 1, 2). A revelation of this kind is an experience of the spiritual life, the human cause of which is an inner tumult of feeling arising from deep contradictions, the solution of which is earnestly sought in God. The divine will manifested in this revelation may be ascertained from Paul's conduct, which followed as the consequence of it. Supported by the results of his apostolic labours among the Gentiles, as God's confirmation of his apostolic authority and of the divine truth of his gospel, he is to go to Jerusalem, and there, at the very heart of the opposition, to win the acknowledgment of his apostolic liberty and the recognition of his gospel to the Gentiles. And this revelation makes Paul so confident, so bold, that besides Barnabas (Acts iv. 36, ix. 27, xi. 22—25) he even takes Titus with him (see Introd. to Ep. to Titus), his assistant in his apostolic labours, an uncircumcised Gentile Christian—takes him into the original stronghold of the circumcised Jewish Christians, as a living testimony to his gospel to the Gentiles which he has preached, and a living proof of his victory when he has obtained it.

Thus, then, fourteen years having elapsed since the fortnight's visit to Peter, without any personal intercourse between Paul and the apostles of Jesus, he goes a second time to Jerusalem, and *for the first time* explains the gospel that he has preached among the Gentiles to the mother community, but privately,



i.e. in a separate interview, to them that are of reputation, the pillars of the Church, James, Cephas and John (see notes on Gal. i. 19; Matt. xvi. 18; Mark iii. 17). In the description which follows, the chief subject of this interview and the most important result are placed in the foreground: "But not even Titus my assistant in my apostolic labours, although an uncircumcised Gentile Christian, was compelled to be circumcised (ver. 3) (how much less then should ordinary Gentile Christians be so compelled)." About nineteen years after the death of Christ, then, the primitive community in Jerusalem still demanded that the Gentile Christians should submit to circumcision, that the Gentile should become a Jew in order that he might be a Christian. Paul then proceeds to describe separately the course of the interview with the community (vv. 4, 5) and the interview with the apostles (vv. 6—10). The description, however, is rendered obscure by the fact that the sentences are broken and incomplete. In the interview with the *community*, the question was discussed of the apostolic liberty of Paul and his independence of the superior authority of those who were in reputation. The submission of Paul to these was demanded in order that his gospel might thereby be brought to nought. It was the false brethren who had crept into his Gentile communities to spy out his liberty who appeared with this demand. On their account (as Paul begins ver. 4), i.e. in order that they might not by carrying out their demands bring to nought his labours in his own communities, and to them (as he says in ver. 5) Paul yielded not for an hour in regard to the submission that was demanded. For his gospel depended upon the independence of his apostleship. Hence also he adds, "in order that the truth of the gospel might endure with you," i.e. I, the apostle of the gospel to the Gentiles, did not submit, as was demanded of me, to the apostles of the Jewish gospel, in order that the truth of the gospel to the Gentiles might remain with you the Gentile Christians, and the superior authority of their gospel to mine might not be deduced from their superior authority over me. In the interview with those who were "of reputation," the question was discussed of the apostolic authority and equality of Paul. Those who were held to be something special, as Paul says, not without hidden irony, urged "what they once were," i.e. their past history, their

direct appointment by the living Messiah, their personal intercourse with the living Jesus, the fact that they had been eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of his works and words (see Acts i. 21, 22). Paul replies, "That matters not to me." Their past only gives an apparent value to their personality. "The outward appearance of a man, God regards it not." But how does Paul know this? Why, to *me*, he says, those who are in reputation communicated nothing in regard to the gospel to the Gentiles; for in spite of the appearance which my past history presented as compared with theirs, it was to *me*, and not to *them*, that God had given a revelation regarding a gospel to the Gentiles, so that it was I who had something to communicate to them (see i. 13—16). Instead of having anything to teach me, they had perceived (from the visible results) that I had been entrusted by God with the gospel to the uncircumcised, in the same way that Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised. What, then, was the proof of this? The results of Paul's labours. In the pious view of Paul, as of those who were of reputation, here was the divine sentence of approval, a practical revelation of the divine will which had been with Paul. "For he who had wrought effectually for Peter in behalf of an apostleship of circumcision, had also wrought effectually in me in behalf of the Gentiles" (ver. 8). "And when those in reputation—viz. James and Cephas and John, who are regarded as pillars—had learnt from the result of my labours the grace which God had given to me, that he had entrusted me with the gospel to the Gentiles, then they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of a fellowship, the purpose of which was, that we should bear the gospel to the Gentiles and they to the circumcision." The two spheres of preaching were to remain distinct because no unity of belief had been attained. But the unity of love was to take the place of unity of belief. This was evidently Paul's proposal, and it is on this account that he adds: "Only we were to *remember the poor* (the name given to the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem). And this very thing I have industriously set myself to carry into effect."

Such, then, was the final result of these important negotiations. Paul had maintained the principle of his gospel to the Gentiles, that the Gentile may become a Christian without having become



a Jew. He had maintained his own independence and the independence of his preaching. He had obtained the recognition of himself as one to whom the gospel to the Gentiles had been entrusted by God. He had not obtained the recognition of his own equality as an apostle with those who were "in reputation." They acknowledged him and Barnabas as *companions* in the preaching of the gospel (as Paul calls Titus his companion and fellow-labourer, 2 Cor. viii. 23), but they denied that he was an *apostle*. And the separation between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians was maintained by this division of the spheres of preaching. Love alone was to unite those who were thus divided. This is the reason why Paul was so zealous in carrying out in his Gentile communities the practice of holding charitable collections for "the poor saints" in Jerusalem (see 1 Cor. xvi. 1 sqq. ; 2 Cor. viii. 9 sqq.).

The object of this account is to prove to the Galatians (whom the Jewish Christians were labouring to bring over to the Jewish-Christian gospel, circumcision and the Law) that, even in the very stronghold of Jewish Christianity, Paul had maintained the divine truth of the gospel to the Gentiles and his apostolic independence.

#### ii. 11—21.

Argument from the fact that Paul had maintained the truth of the gospel to the Gentiles against Peter and the emissaries of James in Antioch.

11. *He was to be blamed* should be "he stood condemned."—13. *Dissembled . . . dissimulation*: "acted hypocritically . . . hypocrisy."—14. *Walked not, &c.*, should be "walked not firmly and uprightly towards the truth of the gospel."—*And not as do the Jews* should be omitted.—16. *But by the faith of Jesus Christ* should be "unless it be by means of faith in Jesus Christ."—17. *Seek . . . are found* should be "sought . . . were found."—18. Read, "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me."—21. *Is dead in vain* should be "died for nought," i.e. his death was superfluous, useless.

Probably not long after the interview in Jerusalem described above (ii. 1—10), Peter, the supporter of the gospel of the cir-

cumcision, came to Antioch, at that time the mother community of the Pauline or Gentile-Christian gospel. Coming from the *unmixed* Jewish community in Jerusalem, in which the customs of the Jewish Law were still observed without any change, he here entered a *mixed* community of Jews and Gentiles, in which a uniform style of life had been secured under the influence of Paul and Barnabas by the renunciation, on the part of the believing Jews, of Jewish customs and Jewish laws concerning meats as matters of indifference in regard to righteousness before God. Peter, who in the unmixed community of Jewish believers had no doubt observed the Jewish laws in regard to meats, yielded to the prevailing spirit in Antioch. He, a Jew, ate and drank with the Gentiles. Even he put the Jewish laws on one side. This conduct on the part of Peter aroused the believing Jews in Jerusalem, for his position rendered his actions of fundamental importance. The very existence of Jewish Christianity is in danger if the supporter of the Jewish-Christian gospel gives up the legal and national customs as matters of indifference. James, the leader of the community in Jerusalem, the consistent representative of Jewish Christianity, sends circumcisers to Peter in Antioch. What they were sent for and what they did we learn from the result. Peter—afraid of them—gradually draws back and separates himself from the believing Gentiles (as the clean from the unclean, according to Jewish ideas). Nay, under the influence of the circumcisers and the conduct of Peter, all the rest of the believing Jews follow this hypocritical course, so that even Barnabas, for many years Paul's fellow-labourer and companion in spirit, is carried away by their hypocrisy.

When Peter ate with the Gentiles, it was plain that he was acting under the influence of the spirit of Jesus. Jesus had always emphasized the fact that the pious disposition is an inward thing, and had set aside the external customs of the Judaic Law as matters of indifference. He had rejected them wherever they came into collision with the inwardness of life. Where there was no such collision, he had let them alone. He had neither pronounced nor required their abolition as a conscious principle. He had thus cherished in his disciples a spirit of indifference towards these forms; and yet, after all, their liberty could only be partial, because it was unconscious. After the death



of Jesus, Paul, with conscious logical consistency, demanded the rejection of the Law and its customs. The Jewish Christians under James, with like conscious logical consistency, demanded, on the contrary, the maintenance of the customs of the national Law. And now Peter and those who are with him, only half free because unconscious of their freedom, being afraid of the complete freedom, fall back into the complete servitude. Paul, severe as usual in his judgment of his opponents, calls this conduct of Peter's hypocrisy, in which he stands condemned. But, after all, it is only the weakness of confused and inconsistent thought and will, which falls a sacrifice to the clear and conscious will of James.

Peter's position, however, rendered his action in this matter of fundamental importance to Paul, no less than to the Jewish Christians. It was a moral compulsion laid upon the Gentile Christians, who might take part with one of the chief apostles in the belief that, after all, the observance of Jewish customs was necessary to righteousness. Hence, when he sees that Peter and the Jews who believe in the Messiah do not walk firmly and uprightly in the direction of the truth of the gospel, but like lame men totter first to one side and then the other between Judaism and Christianity (comp. 1 Kings xviii. 21), he rises up against Peter before the whole community, and crushes him, and overthrows his position that the customs of the Jewish Law are necessary to every one, even for the Gentiles who believe in Christ.

This speech of Paul's has an introduction and three divisions. In the introduction, Paul turns the conduct of which Peter has been guilty, under an obscure sense of fear, into a conscious purpose, and so brings out the undignified inconsistency both of the act and the actor (ver. 14). Then Paul attacks this logical inconsistency in Peter from his own Jewish-Christian point of view. In the first division of his speech he puts himself in the position of Peter as a Jew who believes in the Messiah, and shows how from this point of view one must pass logically to the principle of the Pauline gospel to the Gentiles (vv. 15, 16). He then opposes to this principle a consequence which the Jewish Christians drew from it, and by the impiety of which they attempted to overthrow the principle itself [ver. 17], and shows the injustice of this conclusion (vv. 18—20). Having thus defended his own

principle, he proceeds to the attack, and deduces from the principle of Jewish Christianity a conclusion, the impiety of which reveals the falsity of Jewish Christianity (ver. 21).

14. By way of introduction, Paul changes the confused conduct of Peter into a clear argument and so shows its inconsistency: "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles (thus proclaiming that Jewish customs are a matter of indifference in regard to righteousness), why dost thou then compel the Gentiles to live as do the Jews (and so maintain the necessity of Jewish customs for the attainment of righteousness)?"

15. Paul next proceeds to look at the matter with Peter from the position of a Judaism which accepts the belief in the Messiah and yet continues to be Judaism; and he shows how this Jewish Christianity, which is only an incomplete step, must be consistently carried on to his own positive position. "We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, unless it be by means of faith in Christ Jesus (i.e. a man can only be justified by the works of the Law by means of faith in some way), even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order that we might be justified by (lit. "out of") faith in Christ, and not by (lit. "out of") works of the Law, because by the works of the Law no flesh shall be justified." That is to say, the Jew who becomes a believer in Christ, and so acknowledges that the Law without faith is insufficient for righteousness, cannot remain in the half-way house of Jewish Christianity, and uniting faith and law declare faith the *means* of obtaining the righteousness of the Law. For if faith is *the necessary means*, then it is faith, and not the Law, that is the *source* of righteousness. And this is Paul's own position. Man, who is flesh, and as flesh is necessarily sinful, so that he *cannot* practically fulfil the Law, is made righteous by faith without Law.

In this logical development of the religious thought of a believing Jew, the latter, who previously never suspected that he was a sinner like the Gentiles, must at the same time acknowledge that he is a sinner. He can only relinquish the purely legal position and turn to faith when he recognizes the Law as insufficient for righteousness. And this he can only do when he recognizes that he himself is by nature and of necessity sinful, and therefore



incapable of actually fulfilling all that stands written in the book of the Law for him to do (Gal. iii. 10). But the Jew can only recognize himself as naturally sinful when he recognizes himself as a man, and man as flesh. For as being flesh, in distinction from God, who is Spirit, man is by nature sinful, under the dominion of the natural impulses of the senses which must work against the Spirit (Rom. viii. 5—8). This development of consciousness Paul makes clear by first describing the *Jew* as *man*, and then *man* as *flesh*.

17. But as soon as the Jew as a believer in the Messiah is compelled also to recognize the fact of his own sinfulness, while he still retains in part his Jewish ideas and regards the *moral* life from the point of view of the Jewish Law, he is startled and shocked at one of the consequences of Paul's principle of salvation by faith alone, together with the abolition of the Law, namely, the abolition of the Law even for the moral life. He has always considered as a Jew that life according to the commands of the Law has exalted him, above the sinful uncleanness of Gentile dogs, to the holy cleanness of a righteous Israelite. Will not he also, with the abolition of the Law, fall into Gentile sinfulness? If the restraint of the Law be destroyed, will not the sinful impulses of the flesh run riot in him also? Will not the Pauline Messiah, who brings a righteousness which is of faith alone with the abolition of the Law, prove a servant and promoter of the sinfulness of the natural impulses?

The conclusion, that this must be so, horrified the believing Jew who had only half broken away from Judaism and still looked at the moral life from the Jewish legal point of view. It was by means of this conclusion that James had frightened Peter, Barnabas, and all the rest of the half-emancipated Jews in Antioch, back into the complete servitude of Judaism. And now Paul adduces it against himself, in the second part of his speech, in order that he may deny it, and so firmly establish his own principle of righteousness by faith with the abolition of the Law.

“But if we who are Jews by nature, while we sought our righteousness in Christ (and not any longer in the Law), were ourselves found to be sinful—is not Christ then (who abolishes the Law) a servant (i.e. a promoter) of sinfulness?”

By an appeal to this impious conclusion, drawn from Paul's principle of righteousness by faith alone *without the Law*, the believing Jew endeavours to confute the principle itself, and to compel Paul to acknowledge his principle of faith *and* law as the truth.

With horror Paul rejects the impious conclusion. "Far be it" [lit. "let it not be"], he exclaims. And then he proceeds to justify his rejection of it. The conclusion would be right enough if the hypothesis, upon which it has been deduced by the Jewish Christians from Paul's principle, were correct. This hypothesis is the view of the Law which the Jewish Christians still retained from Judaism, viz. that the Law was able to subdue the power of the natural sinful impulses in man, and to make a moral, sinless life possible. This is why the Jewish Christian calls the Pauline Gentile Christians who have done away with the Law "transgressors of the Law," imagining that he himself, if he retains the Law together with faith, is no transgressor of the Law. But this view is false. The Law as external letter (2 Cor. iii. 6) is only able, by the contradiction between the commands of God and the natural sinful impulses, to make the man *conscious* of his sinfulness, or bring him to the *knowledge* of sin (see notes on Rom. iii. 20, vii. 13; Gal. iii. 21), so that from having been unconsciously sinful he becomes a conscious sinner and transgressor of the Law. It can never bring about emancipation from sinfulness and sin. Thus by the Law the Jewish Christian corrupts the principle of faith, and makes use after all of a perverse means for the attainment of his purpose.

18. By means of the above argument, in a very condensed form, Paul confutes the hypothesis on which the conclusion of the Jewish Christian depends, and so overthrows the conclusion itself. "For if I (Peter as a Jewish Christian) build again that which I destroyed (i.e. the Law in its commandments, which I destroyed when I became a believer), I make myself a (conscious) transgressor of the Law. (But others like the Gentiles, who do not build up the Law again, are not transgressors. For where there is no law, there is no transgression of the law.)" See note on Rom. iv. 15.

19. Paul now proceeds to show that the conclusion which the Jewish Christian draws does not properly follow from the position



which he takes. "For I (Paul as a Gentile Christian) through the Law am dead to the Law, that I may live unto God (and not to the natural sinful impulses). I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I (the old sinful man) that live, but Christ that liveth in me." The truth of this rests upon the arguments of Rom. vi. 1—14, vii. 1—6, that Christ, by his death upon the cross, has satisfied the curse of sin under the Law—which makes death the wages of sin—and so has died to the Law. In his union with Christ, therefore, the believer also has died to the Law (Rom. vii. 4), so that he no longer lives unto the Law, but in a new life of the Spirit lives unto God (Rom. vii. 6). But as in the death of Christ upon the cross the flesh has been slain, and in the flesh the power of the sinful natural impulses (Rom. viii. 3), so in the union of the believer with Christ the flesh and the sinful natural impulses have been slain in him also, so that henceforth he lives not as the Ego, the old man, but as a new man in whom Christ, the Spirit (Rom. viii. 9), is the determining power. Then the sinful natural impulse has ceased to have any power in the moral life. By the living power of Christ, the Spirit, the moral life has become a holy life in the Spirit (Rom. vi. 3—13).

Thus Paul has proved that his principle of faith without the Law does not really admit of the conclusion drawn by the Jewish Christian, that Christ is a promoter of sin. On the contrary, by the appearance of a new living power in the believer with Christ, Christ becomes the promoter of a holy life.

It is true that, as long as the believer lives *in the actual reality* of this present age in the flesh, the power of the flesh does unfortunately still work even in him. And so it is possible that even in the moral life of the believer the sinfulness of his nature may be revealed as actual sin. But if it is to provide against this that the Jew would build up the Law again, Paul has already shown the perversity of this course. The Law is not capable of doing away with the sinful act; only faith can secure the forgiveness of the guilt of sin, faith, namely, in the grace of God and the death of Christ upon the cross, which does away, not indeed with sin, but with the guilt and punishment of sin. This is the meaning of the words, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself up for me."

Paul has thus securely established his own principle of faith without the Law. In the third part of his speech he proceeds to the attack. By restoring the Law, the Jewish Christian has restored the legal position in regard to the relation between God and man—the position of a righteousness which gives to the sinner the due wages of his own action. In doing this the Jewish Christian annuls God's act of redemption in the death of Christ upon the cross. This is the meaning of Paul's words, "I do *not* set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness be by means of the Law, then Christ died for nought." The death of the Son of God upon the cross, this highest saving act of God, is then altogether superfluous. By reducing it to this impious conclusion, Paul overthrows Jewish Christianity—the combination of faith *and* law.

These two conclusions, that which Peter draws from the principle of Paul, "Then is Christ a promoter of sinfulness," and that which Paul draws from the principle of Peter, "Then has Christ died for nought," show us what a vast interval there was between the Jewish gospel of Peter and the Gentile gospel of Paul.

The object, however, of the account of the proceedings in Antioch here given is to show the Galatians, who had been decoyed away from the Gentile gospel to the Jewish gospel, from Paul to Peter, by Jewish Christians, how before the whole community Paul had openly maintained the divine truth of his gospel against this prince among the apostles of Jewish Christianity, and had overthrown the gospel of Jewish Christianity itself.

### iii. 1—iv. 7. SECOND PART.

*The divine TRUTH of the Pauline gospel to the Gentiles, in making the possession of the blessings of Messianic salvation dependent upon faith alone, without the Law, demonstrated by its agreement with the word of God in the Scripture.*

The Jewish Christians in Galatia had denied not only the divine origin of the Pauline gospel to the Gentiles, but also its divine truth. They had affirmed that it was in contradiction to the divine word of the Old Testament, which was the ultimate source of truth for Paul as well as for them, and through Paul for the Gentile communities founded by him. They had pointed out that, according to the divine word of Scripture, God's plan of



salvation had promised the possessions of salvation only to Abraham and his seed, and to the latter only in the same way as to Abraham, who was justified by works (Rom. iv. 2), and further that the seed of Abraham was the Jewish nation descended from Abraham and separated from among the nations by circumcision and the Law, that the Gentile Galatians could only become members of the Jewish people and the seed of Abraham by accepting circumcision and the Law, and, as the seed of Abraham, could only become heirs of the promise through righteousness, like that of Abraham, by the works of the Law. All this, and the prospect of obtaining possession of the blessings of the Messianic kingdom by means of this charm, had so befooled the Galatians that they had resolved to accept both Law and circumcision, and the gospel of circumcision with the righteousness of the Law by works, and to renounce the gospel of Jesus Christ the crucified, which by grace promises to all men righteousness and life, and the inheritance of the treasures of salvation, by faith alone, without the works of the Law, for the sake of the death upon the cross.

Thus Paul is under the necessity of proving the truth of his gospel on this very same ground of the divine word of Scripture. This explains the form of his argument, and the fact that it is based throughout upon Scripture, instead of resting, as in the Epistle to the Romans, upon the nature of man, sin and the Law.

### iii. 1.

The words, *that ye should not obey the truth*, and *among you*, are a gloss, and should be omitted.

This verse connects the second part of the Epistle with what has immediately preceded. With deep emotion, stirred by the clear proof just completed of the falsity of Jewish Christianity and the prospect of the inclination of the Galatians to fall away into this error, Paul exclaims: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, before whose very eyes Jesus Christ (the Messiah) hath been depicted as the crucified?" i.e. all this has been set forth as plainly as if they had seen it with their own eyes.

### iii. 2—iv. 7. *Refutation of the Jewish Christians.*

With verse 2 the apostle enters upon the refutation of the magic watchword of the Jewish Christians. He also starts from

the same position, that only the seed of Abraham, in the same way as Abraham, is heir of the promise. But he proves it to be the word of God in the Scripture that only the believers are the seed of Abraham, only the righteousness of faith is the righteousness of Abraham, and that the divine will in the plan of salvation has attached the inheritance of the promise exclusively to Christ and faith.

The argument has five divisions: The introduction (vv. 2—7), the argument itself (8—14), the demonstration (15—24), the result (25—29), an appendix in elucidation of a special point (iv. 1—7).

#### 2—7. *Introduction to the Argument.*

4. Read, "Have ye experienced so great a thing in vain? If it be really in vain."—7. Read, "Therefore ye know," &c.

As an introduction to his argument, Paul points the Galatians to a fact in their own life of faith from which they may learn by their own experience the actual law according to which the will of God bestows the blessings of salvation.—They are given, not as wages for personal efficiency in works of the Law, but as a gift of grace for readiness to receive them in faith. "Did ye receive the Spirit (the Spirit of God, the first fruits and pledge of all the blessings of salvation, Rom. viii. 23; 2 Cor. v. 5) by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?" In this last peculiar expression he expresses the pure receptivity of faith which, with open heart listening for the preaching of the word, receives the Spirit of God by faith. Before pursuing this thought further, however (ver. 5), he introduces parenthetically a sharp rebuke (vv. 3, 4): "Are ye so foolish? Beginning [lit. "having begun"] with the Spirit of God, are ye now being made perfect in the flesh?" referring to the fact that the Jewish Christians maintained that only circumcision, the external unspiritual form, could make the Gentiles complete Christians and full citizens in the Messianic kingdom. In Paul's opinion, on the other hand, circumcision actually deprives them of the results of grace which they have attained (see Gal. v. 3, 4). Hence he adds, "Did ye experience so great a thing (i.e. the reception of the Spirit of God) in vain?" confirming his sentence with the words, "If it really was in vain." Then returning to ver. 2, he once more brings out the actual law of the divine plan of salvation



from the experience of the Galatians themselves. The God, then, who offers you the divine spirit as a pure gift, and works miracles in you, does He do this in consequence of works of the Law, or of the hearing of faith? Here Paul has brought the personal experience of the Galatians themselves into a form in which they can compare it with the personal experience of Abraham, the representative of salvation, in whom the law of the divine plan of salvation was realized for the first time and for all future time. And so he continues, "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness," i.e. the readiness of the believing heart to accept the word of God which appeared inconsistent with all reality (Gen. xv. 5, 6), was by the grace of God reckoned to him as righteousness which he had not earned as wages of his own personal exertion in works. And then Paul concludes: "Ye know, therefore, that those who are of faith (and not those who are of works, as the Jewish Christians maintain) are sons [so lit.] of Abraham (i.e. are they that are one with Abraham in that which is his essential characteristic in the historical plan of salvation, viz., in his faith)."

### iii. 8—14. *The Argument.*

8. *The heathen* should be "the nations" [the same word that is usually rendered "Gentiles," but "nations" at the end of this verse].—*Preached before the gospel*: "made known."—11. *The just shall live by faith* should be "The just shall have life from faith."—14. *Through*: "in."

Paul has now reached the beginning of the argument by which he can prove on scriptural grounds that in the historical plan of salvation which begins with Abraham, the divine will has attached the blessing of the possessions of Messianic salvation to faith and not to the Law (8—14). This historical plan of salvation has three stages. The beginning is the blessing of the promise in Abraham, the middle is the curse of sin in the Law of Moses, and the end is the fulfilment of the promise in Christ.

8, 9. The *beginning* reveals the unchangeable law of the divine plan of salvation in the promise to Abraham. "Because the Scripture (i.e. God who speaks in the Scripture) saw beforehand that it is by *faith* that God justifies the Gentiles, it gave beforehand to Abraham (as the impersonation of faith) the

promise: In thee shall all nations (not one alone, the Jewish people) receive the Messianic blessing. And therefore it is the *believers* (and not the doers of the Law) who receive the blessing with *believing* Abraham (and not with Abraham as the doer of works)."

10—12. That this practical law of the divine plan of salvation is not changed or abrogated by the *middle stage* of the order of salvation, the Law of Moses, is proved by Paul from the nature and result of the Law as it appears from the divine word of Scripture. "For all without exception who are of the works of the Law, have been brought under a curse." The truth of this extraordinary assertion Paul proves from the word of God by the following syllogism, which, as need hardly be pointed out, is incomplete. "The Scripture says: Cursed is every one that continueth not in all the things that are written in the book of the Law, to do them." Now it would be possible in itself that any one might actually fulfil all the commands of the Law. In that case he would have righteousness from works of the Law, and, as the reward of this righteousness of the Law, life and the blessings of salvation. But the Scripture itself denies this possibility: "But that no man is justified in the Law in the sight of God (even if he be so in the sight of men) is evident (from the word of Scripture), The just shall have life from faith;" i.e. faith is the foundation of the life of the righteous man, and so the ground of his righteousness itself, inasmuch as life is only a result of righteousness. Now if faith were the principle of the Law, then even according to this saying of Scripture righteousness by the Law would be possible. But according to the Scripture, the principle of the Law is not faith, but—"He who by his actions fulfils the commands of the Law shall have life in them" (ver. 12). Therefore—so we must complete the argument—if, according to the Scriptures, righteousness and life depend upon *faith*, no one is justified before God in the *Law*; therefore no one actually fulfils by his deeds all that is written in the book of the Law; therefore, according to the Scripture, every one is accursed who seeks to establish his righteousness by the works of the Law. Paul has now proved that the law of the divine plan of salvation revealed in Abraham has not been altered or abrogated by the middle stage of its development, viz., the Law of Moses.



The Law by its principle of actual fulfilment of itself does *not* bring righteousness and life, but a curse instead of a blessing.

13, 14. The *end* of the plan of salvation in Christ reveals the same actual law of salvation as is revealed in Abraham. "Christ hath redeemed us" (who in the middle period were under the curse of the Law) "from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us (by his death upon the cross)." This is proved by the scriptural saying, "Cursed is every one that hangeth upon the wood (of a cross)." But the object of this, the redemption from the curse of the Law, was, that the plan of salvation which began in the promise to Abraham might attain its ultimate realization, that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles also in Jesus Christ (and not in the Law of Moses), that we all may receive the promise (i.e. the promised Spirit of God as earnest of all the blessings of salvation) by means of faith.

Paul has thus proved to the Galatians from the divine word in Scripture itself, that the will of God in the historical order of salvation has attached the Messianic blessing of salvation to faith, and not to the Law.

But the whole strength of this argument is dependent upon an assertion which is in the sharpest opposition to all previous ideas of history, and especially the ideas of Paul's Jewish-Christian opponents—viz., that the Law of Moses, revealed by God, had brought *upon all without exception*, not righteousness, and life, and blessing as the wages of righteousness, but on the contrary a curse, as the wages of sin; that it was *not* the expression of the divine will for our salvation and of its operative law, but on the contrary was *excluded* from the plan of salvation, and in the divine order of salvation *excluded* from the promise and its fulfilment. Never had the Jew in the whole course of history from the days of Moses, never had the Jewish Christian entertained any other idea than that the divinely revealed Law of Moses had been given for the purpose of righteousness, and life, and blessing; that in it Israel might have obtained, and indeed had obtained, righteousness, and life, and blessing; that the Law of Moses was simply the uniform continuance of God's plan of salvation which had begun in the promise to Abraham, and the Messiah only the uniform fulfilment of that which had thus been continued in the Law of Moses. In Paul's assertion, which declares an entirely

new revelation concerning the divine order of salvation, the Jewish Christian can see nothing but the expression of the impious hatred of a man who is hostile alike to the Law and to the people of the Law. It is this that gives such a terribly serious aspect to the assertion thus maintained against the Jewish Christians (10—14). And to this is added another fact, equally serious. Paul was the *first* to whom the revelation had been given, that the Law of Moses, which up to that time had been held by the Jews to be a revelation of God *eternally valid*, had only a *temporary and finite* validity, notwithstanding the fact that it was a divine revelation. This idea, then, which apparently is so inconsistent, and which by its inconsistency troubles the pious mind, requires to be established in such a manner as to remove all doubt from the mind.

iii. 15—24. *The confirmation of the preceding Argument.*

Paul now turns with the greater care to the confirmation of the preceding argument. He expends upon it all the intelligent ingenuity, and to some extent the ingenious subtlety, which he had learnt in the acutest and most subtle of schools, that of the Pharisaic Rabbis. Nevertheless, he is employing the methods and forms of argument of his age, and so his words have their full force both for him and for his contemporaries.

The question before him is of the significance of the Law of Moses in the historical order of salvation, and its relation to the divine will in the promise, i.e. the beginning of the promise in Abraham and its fulfilment in Christ.

Paul starts (ver. 15) from the undisputed hypothesis of the *immutability* of a divine covenant, which he makes the more secure by comparing it with a human covenant. "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men. Even the covenant of a *man* (who changes, and how much more, therefore, the covenant of God the unchangeable), if it be confirmed, no one disannulleth or addeth thereto." He then proceeds (ver. 16) to state the divine covenant to which this hypothesis is to be applied: "But the promises were given (as the word of God) *to Abraham, and to his seed*" (Gen. xiii. 15, xvii. 19). Paul regards it as of decisive significance that the Scripture here employs the word



seed in the singular. After the rabbinical fashion of interpretation, opposed, indeed, to the original meaning, he infers from this that the word seed refers to an individual, and hence naturally to the Messiah, the fulfiller of the promise. In the next place, he considers it of decisive significance that the Scripture says Abraham *and* his seed, so that, according to Scripture, the divine promise is to *two* only, viz., Abraham and Christ, *to the exclusion of all others*. In order to bring this out the more emphatically, Paul adds: God saith not, And to his seeds (in the plural), as if speaking with a view to many, but as with a view to one, And to his seed (in the singular), which is Christ. From this promise and its two members, *and two only*, according to the word of God, viz., Abraham and Christ, in whom the plan of salvation is revealed, the Law is therefore excluded.

The exclusion of the Law is now more distinctly stated (vv. 17, 18). Having begun with the hypothesis of the immutability of the divine covenant, he now applies that hypothesis to the alleged covenant of the promise to Abraham and Christ. "And this I say, A covenant previously made valid by God (the words "*in Christ*" should be omitted) cannot be invalidated by the Law which came four hundred and thirty years afterwards (reckoning according to the Greek version of Exod. xii. 40), so as to make the promise of none effect." In ver. 18, Paul shows by a concise statement of the essential opposition between a law and a promise, that if, as the Jewish Christians supposed, the Law, instead of being excluded from the promise, was a *continuation* of it, then it must destroy the promise. According to the Law, man receives from justice the merited wages of his own act. According to the promise, he receives from grace an undeserved gift of the divine goodness. This is the meaning of the words: "For if the inheritance were obtained from a law, it would no longer be from a promise. But upon Abraham God bestowed a favour by means of a promise."

Paul has now established upon three distinct grounds his assertion that in the order of salvation the Law has been excluded from the divine plan in the promise to Abraham and Christ; first, upon the ground of the *immutability* of a divinely-appointed order; secondly, of the *form* which God has given in the Scripture to the divine plan of the promise; and thirdly, of

the *essential opposition* between the Law and the promise. But this exclusion of the Law only makes it more puzzling. Is it not a revelation of God? Is it not a part of the order of salvation? Must it not have some definite relation to the promise, and some definite purpose in the divine plan? In answer to this, Paul himself propounds the question: "In these circumstances what is the purpose of the Law?" [lit. "Why then the Law?"], i.e. "what is its meaning and position, within the order of salvation and in regard to the promise?"

Paul replies again to his own question most carefully, both negatively and positively. In the first place (vv. 19, 20), he denies that the Law is one with the promise, as the Jewish Christians affirmed. Previously (vv. 15—18) the exclusion of the Law from the promise was proved from the nature of the promise. Here (vv. 19, 20) it is proved from the nature of the Law, from its purpose, its period, and its form. First, the *purpose* for which God gave it: "It was given for the sake of conscious transgressions of the Law." This has already been explained (ii. 18). It was given in order that the natural sinful impulses unconsciously working in the fleshly nature of man, may, by their opposition to the divine prohibitions of the Law, be made consciously sinful, and so the sinful impulses may be brought to conscious and guilty sin (comp. Rom. vii. 7 sq., 13). Hence the object of the Law is sin (see note on Gal. iii. 10—12), and not the salvation of man, which is the object of the promise. Hence the Law cannot belong to the promise. Secondly, Paul proves this from the *period* for which the Law was given. "It was added (to the promise) until the seed should have come, unto whom the promise was given." This follows from the fact that the promise refers to Abraham and Christ, and that therefore the Law was only added by God temporarily as a transient thing, whereas the promise in Abraham and *Christ* is eternal and eternally valid. Its transience, again, prevents the Law from belonging to the eternal promise. Thirdly and lastly, Paul proves the exclusion of the Law from the promise by the *form* in which the Law was given. "Ordained (by God) by means of angels in the hand of a mediator; but a mediator belongs not to one, but God is One." That God had not given the Law directly, but through the medium of angels, was one of the dogmas of the rabbinical



schools, and, as the consciousness of the spiritual nature of God developed, this idea had become attached in the Greek translation to passages such as Deut. xxxiii. 2 (comp. Heb. ii. 2; Acts vii. 38, 53). That God had given the Law in the hand of Moses who stood between the Lord and the sons of Israel, is stated in Scripture (Deut. v. 5; Levit. xxvi. 46; Num. xxxvi. 13). Hence the later teaching of the schools gave to Moses the name of mediator of the Law, or simply mediator (see Heb. viii. 6, ix. 15, xii. 24). Now this manner in which the Law had been given was a matter of no little importance as regards the view of Paul and his age. The fact that God had given the Law in this particular way, not *directly* but *indirectly* by angels in the hand of a *mediator*, being itself the *expression* of the divine will, *reveals* the divine will to him who is able to recognize the will of God from the fact. And such a one recognizes the will of God from the fact by a "spiritual" interpretation (see note on iv. 21—30), if he considers the nature of a mediator. A mediator has no place except where two or more stand opposed to one another in *diversity* of thought or will, a *diversity* which the mediator reduces to *unity*. Where there is unity of will to begin with, a mediator has no place. This Paul expresses by the general proposition, *A mediator is not of one*. And to this proposition he adds another: *But God is One*; i.e. it is the nature of God to be at one with himself and not at variance with himself (comp. Rom. iii. 30). But these two general propositions do not receive their definite meaning until they are applied to the case in point. From the proposition, *A mediator is not of one*, Paul draws a conclusion in regard to the Law and its place in the order of salvation according to the will of God. That which is true of the mediator by whom the Law was given by God, is also true of the Law according to the will of God. As, therefore, the mediator does not belong to one, so also the Law, according to the will of God, does not belong to one. But the unity of God is completely represented in the promise in its two parts. As in the promise to Abraham, so also in the fulfilment in Christ, God has made the blessings of salvation conditional upon faith. In both parts of the promise He is one in Himself in His plan of salvation, and the *promise* is the definite *expression of the God who is one in Himself*. When, therefore, it is stated generally

that a mediator is not of one, the context makes that mean that the mediator does not belong to the promise. And since that which is true of the mediator is true of the Law, that comes to mean that the Law does not belong to the promise. God, ordaining the Law not directly but through a mediator, has thereby revealed that, as a mediator is not of one, so also the Law does not belong to the promise and to the plan of salvation which is one in the promise. This is what Paul, then, finally proves to the Jewish Christians, from the manner in which the Law was given, against their assertion that the Law belongs to the promise, and that the Law with the promise beforehand and its fulfilment afterwards, Moses with Abraham and Christ, constitutes a uniform development which is an expression of a divine plan of salvation which is one in itself in all *three* stages of the divine order (comp. Rom. v. 20).

So far, however, Paul has only shown the relation in which the Law does *not* stand to the promise. It is necessary, in order to make his reply sufficient, that he should show in what relation the Law actually does stand to the promise. This positive answer he finally gives in vv. 21—24.

For this part of his reply Paul prepares the way by rejecting an apparently logical conclusion which his opponents had drawn from what he had previously demonstrated, and which they urged as a proof of the falsity of his whole argument that the Law did not belong, in the divine plan, to the promise. If the Law does *not* belong to the promise, and yet, like the promise, has proceeded from God and forms with the promise a part of the divine order of salvation, then the Law would seem to be in opposition to the promises of God. And if this were correct, then, promise and Law being alike expressions of the divine will, there would be *contradiction* in the will of the God who is one in Himself. The impossibility of so impious a conclusion would show that the hypothesis on which it rests must be false. But this hypothesis is the relation which Paul declares to exist between the Law and the promise, viz., that the Law does not belong to the promise. This conclusion, therefore, Paul meets, in order to confute it (ver. 21). "Is the Law then against the promises of God?" With horror he rejects the impious conclusion. "Far be it!" And then he gives his reason for rejecting



it. The conclusion would be right enough, if the hypothesis upon which the Jewish Christians had drawn it from Paul's assertion had been correct, viz., that the Law was capable of imparting righteousness. In that case there would be, as the will of God, a righteousness of the Law, as the earned wages of a man's own moral act in the works of the Law, *and* a righteousness of faith as the unearned gift of the divine grace, in spite of a man's own sinful action, and both realized. Then the Law and the righteousness of works would be *opposed* to the promises and the righteousness of faith. But this assumption of the Jewish Christians is false. The Law is only letter, and not spirit (2 Cor. iii. 6). It can only hold up before sinful man the mirror of the divine will from without, unto death. It cannot communicate the life-giving power of the divine Spirit within, to enable him actually to fulfil this will. Hence it can create no righteousness of the Law resulting from actual fulfilment of it. And hence the hypothesis and the conclusion of the Jewish Christians fall together. This is the meaning of the words, "If (as is not the case) there had been a law given which had the power to make alive (i.e. to give the life-creating divine Spirit), then righteousness would really (and not only in the imagination of the Jewish Christians) have been from a law." But the true purpose of the Law in the order of salvation is quite different. The Scripture, i.e. God according to the divine word of Scripture, has shut up the whole human race under the power of sin, i.e. of the sinful natural impulses, as if in a prison (see notes on Rom. v. 12 sqq., iii. 9—19), so that no one can escape this captivity of sin, and earn righteousness and life by his own actions. And this has been done in order that the promise might be given, by *faith* in Jesus Christ, *to them that believe*—i.e. as a free gift of the divine grace to those who *only* believe and do not set up the Law as necessary in addition to faith. This fact in the divine order of salvation (see note on Rom. v. 12), is a necessary condition for the attainment of the divine purpose, and is the appointed province of the Law in the plan of salvation. This is described by Paul as follows (vv. 23, 24): "But before faith (as the principle of the pious life) came, we were kept under the Law as our warder, shut up by God in the prison of sin until the faith which should afterwards be revealed." That is to say, as the warder keeps his prisoner

securely in prison, so the office of the Law was to keep the human race, which was subject to the power of sin, securely in this power, by incessantly rendering man conscious of this power of sin (Rom. iii. 20, vii. 13), and so warning it of the dominion of this power. "Therefore the Law became our guardian unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." That is to say, as the pedagogue, as he was called, the children's guardian and attendant [A.V. "schoolmaster"] among the Greeks and Romans, always accompanied the child wherever he went in order to take care of him and guard him from wrong, saying to him, "This is right; that is sin;" so in the will of God the Law was intended to call to humanity, which was still in its childhood and subject to sin, "This is the holy will of God, and that is your own sin." By thus making humanity conscious that it was subject to the dominion of sin, and therefore unable by its own action to deserve righteousness, the Law prepared the human race for the righteousness which is of faith (see note on Rom. vii. 22, 23).

## 25—29.

Paul has now proved and firmly established, both negatively and positively, his assertion concerning the function of the Law in the divine order of salvation (iii. 10—13) which gave such bitter offence to the Jewish Christians. He is now able to draw from this argument the final conclusion that the believers are the seed of Abraham and heirs of the promise.

26. *The children* should be "sons."—28. *Neither male nor female* should be "not male and female."

25—29. "But now that faith is come, we are no longer under the guardian (the Law). For ye are all"—and here he addresses the Galatians who had been enticed into the slavery of the Law again—"sons (i.e. sons who are free, having attained their majority) of God, by means of faith in Jesus Christ. For all who have been baptized unto Christ have put on Christ." That is to say, as those who were baptized (baptism being originally by complete immersion) were entirely covered by the water, so those who have been baptized unto Christ are, as it were, enveloped in Christ, so that they appear as the image of Christ, the Son of God. And they all appear in the same image, so that every distinction of nationality, rank, or sex, in the actual man,



is done away with in the one spiritual image of the Son of God and the divine man, the pure type of the actual man (see 1 Cor. xv. 47). This is the meaning of the words: "Here is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free man, nor (any distinction between) male and female. For ye are all one in Christ Jesus. But if ye are Christ's, then (according to ver. 16) ye are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."

Thus Paul has destroyed the charm which the Jewish Christians made use of, and shown that *they that believe* are Abraham's seed and heirs of the Messianic blessings of salvation.

iv. 1—7. *Appendix to the preceding Argument.*

The argument which the apostle has employed suggests, however, a new question, which must be answered before we can be completely satisfied. What purpose, then, is served by this intermediate period of the Law, and the curse of sin between the promise and its fulfilment? Paul has, so far, only hinted at the answer, in speaking of the contrast between the warden of *children* and the *sons* of God, and in his statement, "we are no longer under a warden of *children*." He now proceeds to develop this more fully in an appendix to his main argument.

4. *Made of a woman, &c.*: "born of a woman, and made subject to the Law" [lit. as in A.V.].—7. *An heir of God through Christ* should be "an heir through God."

Paul represents the religious history of mankind under the figure of the life of an individual man who as a child has to pass through the period of his minority when he is not free, and is under tutors and governors, until he reaches the time of his majority, which must be fixed by his father. While a child, so far as the paternal inheritance is concerned, he is not to be distinguished from a servant; the term servant being used with allusion to the Jews as the servant of Jehovah (iv. 1, 2). Similarly the human race has its period of infancy when it is not free, and its time of sonship when it has attained its majority and is free. The characteristic of childhood is its objective tendency, and its perception of the material world only (see 1 Cor. xv. 46). So, during this period of its infancy, the human race in its worship has been enslaved under the elements of the *material and visible* universe (comp. Wisdom of Sol. xiii. 2), i.e. sun, moon and stars, which

have either been themselves the objects of its worship or have determined the times of its worship of God, and of its religious festivals. Here, then, an attack is made on the worship and the festivals not only of the Gentiles but also of the Jews (Gen. i. 14). Consistently with the spirituality of the age of sonship, God has poured the divine spirit of his Son into the hearts of those who have been redeemed through Christ, whence, as a proof of their sonship, it cries, *Abba, Father*, in prayer. Thus, then, the redeemed are themselves sons, because by the possession of the Spirit of God they are one with God the Father. But as sons of God they are heirs of the divine possessions of the promise of salvation through God who has made them sons.

Thus Paul concludes again with the fundamental idea of his whole argument against the Jewish Christians. He supplants their attractive idea of the *seed of Abraham* by the much deeper view of the *Son of God*.

#### iv. 8—v. 25. THIRD PART.

The demand of the Jewish Christians that the Galatians should submit to circumcision and the Law is met by Paul's exhortation to them to stand fast in the liberty of Christ.

#### 8—11. *Connecting link between the Second and Third Parts.*

The conduct of the Galatians is inconsistent with the truth of the Pauline gospel which has now been proved from every point of view. Formerly, indeed, when they knew not God, at a time when the human race was still in its infancy and its consciousness was limited to that which is material, in the days of heathenism, they did service to those that by nature were not gods but idols. But now they know God. Yea, more than that, they are known of God, so that they are no longer alien to Him as in the days of their heathenism, when God, as it were, knew nothing of them and cared not for their salvation. And yet, in spite of this, they wish to turn back to the poor feeble elements of the material and visible world (see note on iv. 3)—poor and feeble because they can never give the power and the wealth of the Spirit and of spiritual life. And whereas, through faith in Jesus Christ, by the gift of the Spirit of God they have now been called to be free sons of God, and to worship in spirit Him who



is Spirit, they desire to renew once more their servitude to those elements of the material visible world, as in the days of their infancy and of their consciousness only of material things. But this is what they are doing if they allow themselves to be enticed away by the Jewish Christians to Jewish worship, and observe days (the Sabbath) and months (the New Moons) and times (the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles) and years (the Jubilee years), observances which are regulated by the sun and moon, and are not a free service of the spirit. If this be the case, Paul justly fears that his labour has been bestowed upon them in vain.

iv. 12—v. 21.

*Exhortation to stand fast in the liberty from Judaism, from circumcision and the Law.*

The inconsistency between this desire of the Galatians to adopt a Jewish life and the proved truth of the gospel to the Gentiles, gives rise to an exhortation to do away with the inconsistency itself and hold fast to the liberty from Law and circumcision which has been secured by the death of Christ upon the cross.

iv. 12—30.

Preparation for this exhortation, in which the apostle appeals first to the *feelings* (12—20) and then to the *understanding* (21—30) of the Galatians.

12—20. *Appeal to the feelings of the Galatians.*

12. Read, "Become as I am, for I have become as ye are, brethren, I beseech you: ye have done me no injury."—13. *Through* should be "because of."—14. Read, "And your temptation in my flesh ye despised not," &c.—15. Read, "How is it then with [lit. "What then is"] your blessing?"—16. Read, "So that I am become your enemy because I proclaim to you the truth?"—17. Read, "They are zealous about you, but not well. They desire to exclude you that you may be zealous about them."

In order to prepare a way for his exhortation, Paul endeavours first of all to win back the affection of the Galatians, which had been alienated from him by the exertions of the Jewish Christians. Be as I am, he exclaims, free from Jewish customs, for even I have become as you are, have become as a Gentile in Gentile customs (see 1 Cor. ix. 21). The foundation of this

appeal he lays by calling to mind the fact that (hitherto) they have never done him any injury, and this again brings him to recall the overflowing love which they showed him at the time of his first preaching among them, in order that by so doing he may arouse again their love to him in hearts that have become distrustful of him. "Ye know," he reminds them, "that because of a weakness of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you the former time. And your temptation in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected, but ye received me as a messenger of God, as Christ Jesus." This "weakness of the flesh" was not a bodily sickness, but a weakness of the physical side of Paul's nature as contrasted with the strength of the spiritual side, a weakness which was probably connected with his visionary states (see note on 2 Cor. xii. 7—10), and manifested itself in states of physical weakness resembling a swoon and following upon attacks of convulsions. Such attacks were looked upon by the ancients either as possession by a Satanic angel (see 2 Cor. xii. 7), or as possession by the Spirit of God, as "holy sickness." It is for this reason that Paul speaks of this "weakness of the flesh" as a temptation in his flesh, a test of the Galatians whether they would reject him (lit. "spit him out") as one possessed by Satan, or believe in him as one inspired by God, and so receive him. And they received him in faith as their saviour sent from heaven, yea from God himself. Hence Paul adds the question, "How, therefore, is it now with your blessing?" and then depicts the greatness of it, in order to answer his question with another painful question: "Is it so that I am become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" Is that the final outcome of the former extravagant self-congratulation? The Jewish Christians had represented Paul as an "*enemy*" on the ground that, by hindering the Galatians from accepting circumcision and the Law, he was hindering them from obtaining full citizenship in the Messianic kingdom. This is the meaning of the words in which Paul continues (ver. 17): They, the Jewish Christians, "are zealous about you, but not well;" but they wish to exclude you, the Gentile Christians, from the Messianic kingdom, in order that you may be zealous about them, and accept circumcision. Then he adds a few words, full of a gentle irony touched with pain and sadness, upon the quick reversal of the zeal of the Galatians of which he had had



experience: "But it is good to be zealous about that which is good at all times, and not only when I am present with you" (referring to his second visit immediately before the letter was written), "my little children, of whom I travail in pain again until Christ be formed in you"—one of those spiritual ideas of Paul, in which Christ as the Son of God and at the same time the type of man (see note on iii. 25—29) appears as born into life with faith within the inner man. Finally, he adds: I desire to be present with you *and to change my voice* from the harshness of displeasure (comp. i. 6, iii. 1) to the soft tones of a persuasive love, because I am in doubt of you whether, notwithstanding your zeal on the occasion of my second visit, you be not now, after all, on the very point of falling away from my gospel.

21—30. *Appeal to the understanding of the Galatians.*

24, 25. Read, "Which things are an allegory, for these are the two covenants, the one from Mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, which is Agar and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, for it does bond service with its children."—The words, *For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia*, are a later interpolation, giving a false explanation of the passage.—26. *The mother of us all* should be "our mother." 27. *Break forth*: i.e. with cries of rejoicing.

Paul confirms his appeal to the feelings of the Galatians by an appeal to their understanding. A proper understanding of the very Law under which they desire to place themselves shall show them that the call to liberty from the Law and from everything Jewish is the demand of the Law itself. This is what he means by the words, *Do ye not hear the Law?* The saying of Matt. xiii. 9, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," is explained in Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, by the addition, "what the Spirit saith." So here the word "hear" is used of one who, as it were, with the inner ear of the spirit hears the spiritual meaning behind the letter of Scripture, and so understands. For, according to the ideas of Paul and his age, the word of Scripture, as a revelation of the Spirit of God, contained an additional meaning which was spiritual and divine, behind the natural meaning of the letter; and it is this spiritual meaning which reveals that which God intends the letter to reveal to men. Now

according to the letter of the Law, Abraham received two sons (Gen. xvi. 15, xxi. 2), the one by the bondmaid and the other by the freewoman, the former naturally, the latter, in pursuance of a promise, by the immediate and miraculous omnipotence of the divine Spirit (see notes on Rom. iv. 18—21). The spiritual meaning of the letter of the word of God reveals here a two-fold covenant as the will of God. The *one* is the covenant of Mount Sinai, which bears children unto bondage (the bondage of the Law), like Hagar the bondmaid. This corresponds to the present earthly Jerusalem and its children by natural birth (its inhabitants), who, as servants of Jehovah, do the service of bondage in the Law. The *other* is the covenant of the Jerusalem which is above, the heavenly Jerusalem (comp. Rev. iii. 12, xxi. 2; Heb. xii. 22), a covenant of liberty, even as the heavenly Jerusalem itself is not under the Law of Moses. But this heavenly Jerusalem is the mother of them that believe. This Paul proves by referring Is. liv. 1 to the heavenly Jerusalem. According to this passage, the will of God in the Scriptures has destined for the heavenly Jerusalem (which has no connection with the material and earthly), not children born naturally according to the flesh, but children of a spiritual birth, born by the miraculous power of the divine Spirit, and in accordance with the promise. Similarly it is the Gentile believers who, by the omnipotence of the divine call, are born as children of the promise, just as Isaac the child of Sarah, the freewoman, was born according to the promise, (Rom. iv. 19). And the fortune, also, of these is similar to that of the sons of Abraham. As Ishmael, the slave son, persecuted Isaac the son of the freewoman (this was a late tradition, based upon Gen. xxi. 9), so the Jew, the son of Abraham after the flesh, persecuted the believer, the spiritual son of Abraham. To him, then, refers, moreover, the saying (Gen. xxi. 10), "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir (shall not obtain the Messianic inheritance) with the son of the freewoman." Paul has thus shown how, according to the divine meaning of the Law, the Jew, the circumcised worker of the Law, is excluded from the Messianic inheritance; in so doing he has shown that the believer must, according to the will of God, banish both circumcision and Law from his faith.



iv. 31—v. 1. *The exhortation itself.*

1. Read, "For freedom did Christ make us free. Stand fast, therefore, and be not bound again with a yoke of bondage."

As the result of this interpretation of the divine word of Scripture, Paul cries to the Galatians: Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the freewoman. And then on this ground he adds the pointed and conclusive warning, "For freedom did Christ make us free," i.e. not that we may be brought back to a new bondage of the Law.

v. 2—24. *Justification of this exhortation.*

Paul justifies his exhortation *first* against the Jewish-Christian attempts to persuade the Galatians to accept circumcision (2—12), and *secondly* against their complaints that the liberty of the Galatians was a liberty unto sin (12—24).

## v. 2—12.

Against the illusions by means of which the Jewish Christians have cajoled the Galatians into accepting *circumcision*.

4. *Christ is become of no effect unto you*: "Ye have lost Christ" [lit. ye are done away with from Christ].—*Are justified* should be "are being justified."—7. *That ye should not obey the truth* should be omitted. [These words may be only a gloss added to explain "who hath bewitched you," but there is no MS. authority for omitting them].—8. *Persuasion* should be "cajolery."—11. *Then is, &c.*, should be, "Why then the offence of the cross is done away!"—12. Read, "I would that they would cut themselves off altogether, that stir you up (to rebellion)."

Feeling secure now of having attached to himself again both the affections and the reason of the Galatians by the arguments which have preceded (iv. 12—30), Paul proceeds to confirm his exhortation (of v. 1) by the introduction of his own personal authority against the Jewish Christians and their deceptive representations. He deals first with their enticements to circumcision. They had pretended that circumcision was a mere form, which did not interfere at all with the grace of God in Christ (see p. 268), nor invalidate forgiving grace. This superficial and hypocritical assertion Paul meets with the earnest declaration, "Every man that is circumcised is bound actually

to fulfil the whole Law." Circumcision is not an indifferent form. It is a pledge to the principle of the Law, viz. righteousness of man the reward of his own action given by the righteousness of God. Therefore whosoever is justified in the Law is separated from Christ and grace. In Christ the righteousness of a holy life is obtained, not by the man's own action in the works of the Law, but by the action of the divine Spirit which dwells in the believer as the result of his faith. In him, righteousness is a hope, is expected from God, the Giver of the spirit, not consciously possessed as one's own actual possession like one's own action in the Law. Righteousness of life can only arise in the believer as a result of the working of the Spirit of God in him (see note on Rom. viii. 4), and not as a result of submission to the external form of circumcision. For in Christ only that which is spiritual has any essential power. Neither circumcision availeth anything (i.e. to give righteousness), nor uncircumcision (i.e. to withhold righteousness), but only faith which worketh by love (i.e. faith which, being a faith in the unselfish self-sacrificing love of Christ, compels the believer in Christ unselfishly to sacrifice himself in love for his brother).

In this spirit the faith of the Galatians and their life in the faith had been progressing admirably. "Who did hinder you?" asks Paul with pain. The attempt of the Jewish Christians to cajole you into submission to circumcision, which hindered you, cometh not from the God who called you in grace (see i. 6). He further assures the Galatians that the acceptance of circumcision vitiates their whole life of faith, as a little leaven leavens the whole mass of dough. He assures them that, as far as they themselves are concerned, he has confidence in them that they will not be otherwise minded than he has taught them in the gospel; but that he who troubles their consciences with the other gospel (see i. 7) shall bear the burden of the divine judgment, whosoever he be; showing by this latter phrase that he alludes to some one of position and importance (comp. pp. 263 sq.). Paul takes up his own position in opposition to him, and gives to the Galatians the real though undeclared reason why he is persecuted by the Jewish Christians: "And I, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the offence of the cross is done away." The cross of Christ which Paul



preached in his gospel to the Gentiles is an offence (1 Cor. i. 23) to the Jewish Christians, because this preaching of the cross makes the possession of the Messianic kingdom and its blessings dependent upon faith alone, and not on circumcision. That is to say, it does not require the Gentiles to become Jews before being admitted to the kingdom, and so it does away with the Old Testament privilege of Jewish nationality as a matter of indifference. This is the offence which the Jewish Christians felt, proceeding from their adherence to the national privilege, and this is the reason why they so passionately persecuted Paul. If only Paul would still (i.e. even after the death of Christ) preach circumcision, and so keep the Gentile believers as well as the Jewish to circumcision and Jewish nationality, then the Jewish Christians would no longer persecute him. So, then, the thought is thus curiously expressed (ver. 11) in order to show the Galatians that the *sole* cause of Paul's persecution is that he no longer preaches circumcision. The anxiety for it and the offence on the part of the Jews at the cross of Christ are but an ungodly impulse of national vanity, resisting the will of God in the cross of Christ; and therefore it is that Paul hurls at them such bitter and scornful words: "I would that they were cut off altogether" who insist upon circumcision and set you against me and my gospel of the cross.

But the justice of these bitter words is based by Paul upon the fact that the Gentiles have been called unto liberty, and so he takes up again the admonition of v. 1 in order to confirm it now from the other point of view.

#### v. 13—24.

Defence of Paul's exhortation to freedom against the charge that this liberty from the Law is a liberty unto sin. This charge had been brought forward by the Jewish Christians as a pretext for persuading the Galatians to submit to the Mosaic Law.

13. *Use not liberty for*: better, "Let not liberty be."—16. *Ye shall not fulfil*: i.e. ye need not then be anxious lest ye should fulfil.—17. *So that ye cannot do the things that ye would* [lit. "Not the things which ye would, those do ye"]: i.e. so that ye do not actually carry into execution that which, it may be, ye desire to do.—20. *Variance*: "strife."—*Seditions, heresies*:

“dissensions, factions.”—22. *Gentleness*: “friendliness.”—23. [*Temperance*: i.e. “self-restraint.”]—*Against such there is no law*: “The law is not against such things.”—24. *Affections and lusts*: “lusts and desires.”

We have already learned from Paul's speech against Peter in Antioch (ii. 17) that the Jewish Christians had argued from Paul's principle of righteousness in Christ by faith alone and the abolition of the Law, that in that case Christ was a promoter of sinfulness, i.e. of the power of the sinful natural impulses which rules in the flesh of man. Arguing in the same way, the Jewish Christians had persuaded the Galatians that the liberty from the Law which Paul preached, was a liberty unto sin. In reply to this, he declares indeed to the Galatians, “Ye have been called unto liberty;” but then he adds at once, But I do not mean the liberty which is an occasion to the flesh, an opportunity of giving play to the sinful desires of the flesh. He opposes to this the principle of Christ, in which liberty is no longer a liberty of the *flesh*, the principle of love which has been made the Christian's law of life in Christ. And he justifies this liberty, which has been sanctified by love, with the words, “For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”

But in order that he may effectually dispose of the objection of the Jewish Christians that the liberty of the Pauline gospel is an unchaining of the flesh and the lusts of the flesh, he now asserts (ver. 16) that those who walk without the Law, but in the Spirit of God, need not be afraid that they will fulfil the lusts of the flesh. In proof of this, he points to the conflict between two powers, the power of the Spirit of God and the power of the flesh of man, in relation to the man's own inner will and act. According to Paul's peculiar view, the divine purpose of this conflict is to prevent man from actually carrying into execution exactly what he inwardly wills. According to Paul's view, man has power to will and freedom of will, but not power to act and freedom of action. His action is determined by the superiority either of the power of the spirit or the power of the flesh. Though perhaps the man inwardly *wills* that which is good, still he *does* that which is evil, if the power of the flesh reigns unbroken within him (see notes on Rom. vii. 15—20). And again perhaps he inwardly *wills* that which is evil, and yet he



*does* that which is good, if the power of the Spirit of God, breaking the power of the flesh, rules in him. If, then, the believer walk in the Spirit, moved by the Spirit of God which has become immanent within him (see notes on Rom. viii. 11 ; Gal. v. 5), he need not be afraid lest he should carry out in action the impulses of the flesh, not even though his inner will agree with them. Upon this principle Paul bases his statement (ver. 18), that if the believer be led by the Spirit, i.e. if the action which he performs be a result of the determining power of the divine Spirit, then he is no longer under the Law. He further explains his meaning by giving the catalogue of the works of the flesh (*works*, because he regards them as man's own action), i.e. of sinful acts, and opposing to it the catalogue of good actions, the fruit of the Spirit (*fruit*, because he regards them as the product of the power of the Spirit of God, which is foreign to man's own nature). But now the Law (i.e. the Mosaic Law, Rom. xiii. 9) is essentially the prohibition of that which is sinful. It is always directed towards sin. It is not directed against that which is good. Whosoever, therefore, doeth that which is good, is no longer under the Law (comp. ver. 23 with ver. 18). But such are they that belong to Jesus Christ, the believers. For these, in belief in Christ, have at their baptism (Gal. iii. 27 ; Rom. vi. 3 sqq.) crucified the flesh with its desires and lusts. This being the case, the liberty of the believer cannot be a liberty unto sin or an occasion for the flesh (see ver. 13).

#### v. 25—vi. 10. THIRD PART.

*Secondary subject of the Epistle. Special exhortations depending upon the special circumstances of the Galatian communities.*

#### v. 25—vi. 5.

*Warning against conceit, and exhortation to mutual consideration and tolerance.*

26. Read, "Let us not fall into empty conceit, provoking one another, envying one another."—2. *Fulfil*: "ye will fulfil."—4. *Have rejoicing*, &c., should be, "have his fame in himself alone, and not in his neighbour."

Paul connects the exhortations which follow with the arguments that have preceded by stating the principle, "If we live

in the Spirit (i.e. if, having crucified our flesh, we now have a new life in the Spirit, Rom. vi. 3 sqq.), let us also walk in the Spirit." Then he first warns the Galatians against falling into empty conceit, those who are conceited provoking the others to guard themselves against their conceit, and those who are thus provoked envying them. He then turns to those that are "*spiritual*" (ver. 1), i.e. those in the community who laid some special claim to the possession of the divine Spirit (see 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15), and so became conceited. He requires them, in case a man be overtaken in any fault (affectionately sheltering from the over-conceited by the very phrase which he uses), to restore such an one in the spirit of gentleness, instead of condemning him in unloving self-righteousness, "considering thyself—thou who art spiritual—lest thou also be tempted." He exhorts all to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ, the law of that love which is self-sacrificing even unto death. The reason which he gives for this "bearing of one another's burdens" is, that if any one (i.e. one that is "*spiritual*") in his own conceit imagines that he is something, i.e. imagines that he has no moral burden of his own to bear, or that he is exposed to no temptation of his own, while after all he is really nothing—for he is still only a man as long as he lives in the flesh and is subject to the power of the flesh (Gal. ii. 20)—then he deceives himself. Every one should make his own work—his own actual deeds and not his conceited imagination—the test by which to try himself. Then—he adds with quiet irony, meaning something very different—he shall have glory in himself, and not in relation to his neighbour. That is to say, no one in testing his work must measure himself by his neighbour (over whom, may be, he exalts himself), and so in his neighbour seek cause for boasting of himself. Every one must test himself by his own actual self, and then he will very soon find that in himself he has no ground for boasting. For every one will bear his own burden of sin.

## vi. 6—10.

*Exhortation to benevolence, especially towards teachers and companions of the faith.*

6. Read, "But with him that is taught in the word, let him that teacheth him share in all his goods" [lit. as in A.V., where,



however, "good things" should be understood of material things, "goods," so that the meaning is the same].—8. *To his flesh* should be "unto his own flesh."

Paul introduces the reason for this exhortation of ver. 6 with the words, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked" (ver. 7), i.e. do not fall into the dangerous error of supposing that man may rely upon his own faith and the grace of God, and not mind about his actions. For man reapeth that which he soweth. He that soweth unto his own flesh, he that is greedy of the goods of this world, for the benefit of his own flesh which is perishable, and does not share them with others, will of that which is corruptible reap corruption and not be made a partaker of eternal life. He that soweth unto the Spirit which is given by God, he that gives up the goods of this world for the well-being of his spirit, will of that which is imperishable reap imperishable life.

In close connection with the preceding verse, now follows (vv. 9, 10) an exhortation to perseverance in well-doing, and attention is called to the reward. For in our own proper time, i.e. on the return of Christ, at the day of judgment, which Paul regards as immediately impending, we shall reap if we have not become weary and idle in well-doing. Consequently he here repeats his previous exhortation: As we have now an opportunity (being conscious, that is to say, that we have only a short space of time left before the return of Christ in which by doing good we may be sowing for our own future harvest), let us do good.

#### vi. 11—18. CONCLUSION OF THE EPISTLE.

11. *How large a letter* should be "with what large letters."—12. *For the cross of Christ* should be "through the cross of Christ."—13. *Neither* should be "not even."—14. *But God forbid, &c.*: more lit. "But far be it from me to boast," &c.—*By whom* should be "by which."

So far the Epistle has been written down by an amanuensis from Paul's dictation. He now adds *a postscript with his own hand*, and in large characters, in order to call the attention of the Galatians especially to it. He will disclose to them, in conclusion, the intimate and undeclared character of the Jewish Christians who are troubling the community, and reveal the impious and insincere motives which lead them to urge the circum-

cision of the Gentile Christians. "All," he says, "who desire to have a fair show in the flesh (i.e. all who themselves still desire to retain circumcision as the fair show of the true people of God), they constrain you to be circumcised; only in order that they may not suffer persecution through the cross of Christ." Paul refers the Jewish-Christian insistence upon the circumcision of the Gentile Christians, in the first place, to Jewish national selfishness and vanity. For by submitting to circumcision the Gentile Christians acknowledge the privilege of the Jewish people of being true people of God, and the Jewish Christians can then boast over Gentile Christians of their circumcision as the sign of the true people of God (comp. 2 Cor. xi. 18—22). He connects with this the purpose which he ascribes to the Jewish Christians of escaping "persecution through the cross of Christ" by means of the circumcision of the Gentiles. For the "*cross of Christ*," the crucifixion of the Messiah, is the practical revelation of a new divine way of salvation, that of righteousness by faith; and thus it gives rise to a new people of God, namely, the believers from among Jews *and* Gentiles, and thereby does away with the prerogative of the Jewish people to be the people of God in the divine kingdom. Thus the cross of Christ becomes an offence (see note on v. 11) unto those Jewish Christians who adhere to the Old Testament national privilege, in opposition to the will of God revealed in the cross of Christ. The existence of uncircumcised Jewish Christians is a constant reminder of this offence of the cross of Christ, and it is this offence which pursues or persecutes the Jewish Christians everywhere in the uncircumcised Gentile-Christian communities. But the acceptance of circumcision by the Gentile Christians removes this offence, and so the persecution by it is stopped.

13. It is no good and pious motive which moves the Jewish Christians, as if they had in view the observance of the moral law, in enforcing circumcision. "For not even they themselves who are circumcised (i.e. the Jewish Christians) keep the Law," still less has their circumcision of the Gentiles been carried out with a view to the keeping of the Law. They desire to have *you* circumcised, so that—as Paul says with bitter sarcasm—they may glory in your (the Gentile Christians') flesh (inasmuch as you Gentile Christians, by submitting to this external form, acknowledge after all the privilege of the Jewish people.)



14—16. In opposition to this direct resistance to God on the part of the Jewish Christians, Paul describes his own attitude of recognition of the divine will in the death upon the cross. "Far be it from me to boast, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world (i.e. everything material and visible, and every show of that which is only external) has been crucified unto me, and I unto the world." For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, neither Judaism nor heathenism, in its mere outward appearance matters anything; but there is a new creation, a new community of God. This, then, is the "*Israel of God*," the new people of God, the true people of God, called according to His will from the believers, both Jews and Gentiles, and founded upon the Spirit. In this idea, which is in the sharpest opposition to the idea of the Jewish Christians, the whole Epistle culminates.

17. In the certainty of the divine truth of his own view, Paul finally cries to the Galatians: From henceforth let no one prepare troubles for me by his unbelief, by apostasy from the gospel which I have preached. *For I*—and here he returns again at the end of his Epistle to those to whom he addressed himself at the beginning, those who denied the divine origin of his apostleship—*I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus*: i.e. in my sufferings as an apostle I have the marks of suffering which Jesus himself bore, and by which he marks as his servant each one who is truly in his service (see note on Gal. i. 10; 2 Cor. xi. 23)—an allusion to the custom among the ancients of branding their slaves so they might know them again.

#### vi. 18. *Concluding Benediction.*

The mention here of the *spirit* of the Galatians is significant, and is specially introduced with a view to the preservation of the divine Spirit which has been bestowed upon them. The reason for this special form of benediction is, that the Galatians were inclined to fall away again from that which was spiritual into that which is carnal (iii. 3, iv. 9, 10), in which case they would have experienced the gift of grace in vain (iii. 4).

A  
SHORT PROTESTANT COMMENTARY  
ON THE BOOKS OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT.  
VOL. III.





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WITH GENERAL AND SPECIAL INTRODUCTIONS.

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EDITED BY  
PROF. PAUL WILHELM SCHMIDT  
AND  
PROF. FRANZ VON HOLZENDORFF.

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## NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

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As in the preceding Volumes, the text, when given in italics, is that of the English Authorized Version. The version in inverted commas is that given by the German commentator, or, when it simply follows the English version without the words "should be" or "read," it is that of Luther accepted by the commentator without remark. When the rendering of the English translators is given without correction, it is either identical with that of the German commentator, or else is already a little closer to the original Greek without differing in sense from his rendering. I have, as before, added a few notes, in square brackets, chiefly such as seemed to be required to adapt a German Commentary to the English Version. It is scarcely necessary to add that where German weights, measures or coins are mentioned, they are reduced in all three volumes to the corresponding English standards.

F. H. J.





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## THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

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THERE is a marked contrast between the undoubtedly genuine Epistles of Paul which have preceded, and the Epistle, in which very general views predominate, which now follows under the name of the Epistle to the Ephesians. It is now half a century since its authenticity was first doubted, and the opinion that it is not the work of Paul has been gaining ground ever since. We are forced to this conclusion by reasons which affect the whole Epistle; they concern its form, contents and purpose, and may be conveniently arranged under seven heads.

(1.) *The address of the Epistle to Ephesus* (i. 1). Paul had long laboured in Ephesus, first among the Jews and afterwards among the Gentiles (Acts xviii. 19—21, xix. 1—xx. 1, 31), and we have special evidence of a considerable Jewish-Christian element in the community (Acts xviii. 19, 20, xix. 8, 13—16, 34; Rev. ii. 1, 2, 6). Our Epistle, on the other hand, assumes a purely Gentile-Christian public (ii. 1, 2, 11—13, 19, iii. 1, 6, iv. 17, 22, v. 8); and not only is there no trace whatever of any personal acquaintance of the writer with the readers of the Epistle, but, on the contrary, he has only heard of them (i. 15, vi. 21) and they of him (iii. 2, 4). There are no greetings either from or to individuals. The writer and his readers are known to each other only by report. How different is the picture of the relation between Paul and the Ephesians which we form from Acts xx. 17—38! On these grounds Marcion regarded this as the Epistle to the Laodiceans referred to in Col. iv. 16; and two learned writers of the early Church (Origen and Basilus) inform us that the words



"at Ephesus" (i. 1) were not found in the old Bibles, and this may in fact still be seen in the two oldest and best MSS. now extant (the Vatican and Sinaitic). The Epistle then, as is now almost universally allowed, was originally intended as a circular addressed probably to the group of communities in Asia Minor which are mentioned in Rev. i. 11. Of these, Ephesus was the first and Laodicea the last. To the latter city our Epistle is intended to come (Col. iv. 16), and thence to be brought at last to the knowledge of another community for which it was not originally intended. This general purpose, however, removes the Epistle from the series of the Epistles of Paul, all of which have some definite local destination.

(2.) *The general contents of the Epistle.* The Epistle is entirely devoted to the promotion of the unity of the Christian Church, on the ground of the unity of God's plan of salvation, which embraces the whole human world, and which is contrasted with the previous division of humanity into Jews and Gentiles (ii. 13—22, iii. 6, iv. 3—6). This is not the language of one who is himself engaged in the strife and turmoil of the labours which attended the introduction of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God. It is natural, however, for a later writer, himself also a Jew by birth (see notes on i. 12, 13, ii. 3), at a time when the harvest of Paul's vast labours is beginning to ripen, when the mission to the Gentiles has produced its fruits, and a united church of Jews and Gentiles is to take the place of the former division of the nations, thus to look back to Paul's completed work. To this later position is due also the writer's comprehensive, general and purely objective treatment of his subject (ii. 20, iii. 5, iv. 11).

(3.) In the passages just referred to, the writer speaks of "*the apostles*" as a third party to which neither his hearers nor himself belong, and in language which is inconceivable in the mouth of Paul in reference to a class of which he himself is actually a member. Especially do we detect the writer (iii. 5) when he puts himself in the position of the "apostles," who have now had their ideas extended and enlightened by a divine revelation concerning

the calling of the Gentiles, and who are spoken of as the "holy apostles," an epithet never applied to them elsewhere in the New Testament, and here used altogether in the later ecclesiastical sense of the word "saints." This explains the stress laid upon his official position, recurring again in what are called the Pastoral Epistles, and here so often repeated without any sufficient motive (iii. 1—3, 7, iv. 1, vi. 20). It also explains the remarkable allusion to his own history as a thing of the past (iii. 8), and the somewhat forced appeal to his own "understanding," which his readers should be able to perceive (iii. 4). In all this it is not Paul who speaks; but a later disciple, who has indeed the spirit of Paul, overpowered by the historical fact of the gigantic results of his labours a generation after his death, makes him, so to speak, a witness of his own triumph, putting into his mouth this utterance of victory and peace addressed to his communities. Such literary influence after his death was in harmony with the literary labours of Paul during his life. He was the first apostle who possessed it. James, Peter and John, followed.

(4.) Intimate as is the writer's acquaintance with the genuine Pauline Epistles, as we shall show in our notes by continual references to them, he is nevertheless very far from having followed the Pauline model accurately in *language* and *style*. Even those commentators who attempt to rescue the authenticity of the Epistle allow that its style perplexes them by its very manifest divergence from that of the four preceding Epistles. There is a freedom and flow of words, at times almost a bombastic tone, a curious abundance, and indeed cumulation, of rhetorical phrases, a style which proceeds in involved sentences, each being interlinked with the preceding, while the connection is yet frequently interrupted by parentheses. Over and above all this, we find a number of peculiar expressions and terms, words and figures, which Paul does not employ elsewhere. For example, God is called "the Father of glory" (i. 17), "who hath made all things" (iii. 9), "of whom everything that hath a father bears its name" (iii. 15).



(5.) Such terms as those just mentioned are plainly connected with the peculiar *world of ideas and conceptions* of the Epistle generally. Among these peculiar ideas must be reckoned not merely details such as the doctrine of the residence of evil spirits in the air (ii. 2, vi. 12), or a triumph over them in the lower world (iv. 8—10), but the fundamental idea of the Epistle itself, in which Christianity appears as a mystery concealed in God from eternity, raised infinitely above everything else, and first made known to humanity at a definite point in its development by means of a supernatural revelation (see notes on i. 9, iii. 5, 9, v. 32). And the chief subject of this mystery, taking even the angels by surprise (iii. 10), is made to be the union of the human race, hitherto divided, in the one salvation which is the same for all (see notes on i. 10, iii. 6). Hence, while the Pauline doctrine of reconciliation is softened down in favour of good works (see note on ii. 10), and undergoes a curious development in the interests of our author's main principle (see note on ii. 15), a way is prepared for a system in harmony with the average current ideas of the Gentile church (see note on iv. 14), and so Christianity becomes itself a subject of study and knowledge.

(6.) What has been said under the last head explains the frequent mention of "all wisdom and prudence," of "making known" and "revealing," of "hearing" and "learning," "knowledge" and "mystery." And all this points to the spiritual requirements and interests of an age that had gone beyond primitive Christianity, requirements and interests plainly connected with the great movements to which the so-called *Gnosis* gave rise (see Vol. I. pp. 18, 197). In fact, the Epistles with which we are now concerned distinctly mark the point at which the Pauline school was placed in a position to come to a clear understanding as to its points of agreement and disagreement with the rising gnosis (see note on iii. 19). Hence the Christology of this Epistle also goes beyond the Pauline limits. In the place of the "second Adam" who exists for the sake of the human world, it puts a being existing before the world, who is at the same time the

central point and the end of the whole created world, and in whom therefore the earthly and the heavenly spheres alike first reach an articulate yet harmonious unity (see note on i. 10). With this idea of Christ as the central point of the universe is especially connected the expression "fulness," which comes to be so curiously applied in this Epistle (see notes on i. 23, iii. 19, iv. 10, 13). This word plays an important part among the Gnostics, by whom it is used to denote the ascending series of divine beings which taken together forms the complete conception of God. There are other expressions which are likewise Gnostic, such as "æons" (see notes on ii. 7, iii. 11), "generations" (see notes on iii. 5, 21), "lords of the world" (see note on vi. 12), &c.

(7.) It is only when we look at the Epistle from this point of view that a *definite purpose* appears in it. It is difficult to show what object Paul could have had in sending a missive of this kind to the community at Ephesus or anywhere else; but it is very easy to understand how the Epistle might spring from the necessities of a later age, and a longing to hear the great herald and advocate of the cause of Christ speak in this later age upon the new problems which in some cases had presented themselves in so startling a form. This, then, is the source of our Epistle, which is addressed in the first instance to the Gentile Christians in a circle of Christian communities in Asia Minor, and then to the great multitude of Gentiles which was gradually filling the church generally. Its object was partly to instruct them in the principles of their new position in the kingdom of God, and partly to give them, in clear, strong outline, a decree which should meet the requirements of their vacillating conduct. To the first part of this double task the first three chapters are devoted, and to the second part the last three. The division is marked by the Epistle itself, by means of the doxology (iii. 20, 21) which stands between the didactic and the hortatory portions.

Thus, then, we see that the writing now before us presents to us in several respects a new phenomenon when compared with the Pauline Epistles which we have previously considered. But



it is not only these latter the existence of which is assumed in the Epistle to the Ephesians, but also a whole series of *other New-Testament writings* with which it is related in a most striking manner, especially the Revelation (comp. iii. 5 with Rev. x. 7), the Gospel according to Matthew (comp. iv. 29 with Matt. xii. 36, xv. 11, 18), the Gospel according to Luke (comp. vi. 18 with Luke xxi. 36), the Book of Acts (comp. i. 7, 14, iv. 11, v. 25, with Acts xx. 28), and the Epistle to the Hebrews (comp. i. 7, v. 26, with Heb. ix. 12 sqq., xiii. 12).

Practical points of contact between the Epistle to the Ephesians and various other books, as, for example, the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, and the Johannine and Petrine writings, are probably to be explained by the fact that they are nearly contemporaneous with one another (see Vol. I. p. 19).

But, again, we must take an entirely independent explanation of the altogether unique relation which exists between this Epistle and the *Epistle to the Colossians*. It is impossible to suppose that Paul can have copied himself to such an extent, and often even to the very smallest details of expression. Reserving, then, the fuller discussion of this relation between the two for the Introduction to the Epistle to the Colossians, we must be content at present to point out the parallel and the related passages in our notes. Whoever takes the trouble to compare these passages with one another, will see at once that here we are not concerned simply with a general connection between the two Epistles, but with a mutual interaction of arguments and ideas which are at the same time closely connected with one another and essentially distinct from the Pauline domain, in spite of their various points of contact with the latter.

## THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

### CHAPTER i.

[1. *At Ephesus* should be omitted. See pp. 1 sq.]

#### i. 3—14.

A diffuse doxology, un-Pauline in form, impressing upon the readers that their position as Christians is not a matter of their own choice and decision, but the realization of a decree of God which was made before the ages (ver. 4) and has its goal in the end of all history (ver. 10). Each of the three divisions of this section ends with the phrase, "to the praise of his glory." We pass in these three stages from the predestination by God the Father (3—6), through the historical redemption in the Son (6—12), to the sealing by the Spirit (13, 14).

3. After 1 Cor. i. 5; comp. Col. i. 5.

4. Comp. Col. i. 22.—*In love*: These words should probably be taken with the next verse, "And having predestinated us in love."

5. After Rom. viii. 29; Gal. iv. 5.

6. Comp. Col. i. 13.—*Wherein*, &c., should be "wherewith he hath favoured us in the beloved one."

7 = Col. i. 14, 20. After Rom. iii. 24, 25, xi. 26, 27.

8. After 2 Cor. ix. 8; comp. Col. i. 9.—*All wisdom and prudence*: which he has imparted to us as necessary for the furtherance of our salvation.

9, 10. *Which he*, &c., should be "which he determined in himself for the disposition of the fulness of the times, that he might gather together," &c.

9. After Rom. viii. 28, ix. 11; comp. Col. i. 26, 27.—The will of God was gracious from all eternity; but to the world, in accordance with a definite plan determined by God, it did not appear until the "fulness of the times" described in ver. 10. This is the conception of the "revelation" in our Epistle.



10. Literally, both here and in iii. 9 [see note on iii. 9], it is not exactly a "dispensation" that the writer speaks of, but an "economy," i.e. an administration or disposition of affairs. This is the name that he gives to the divine plan of salvation which was to be realized in the course of successive "times," so that it is only with the "fulness of times" (after Gal. iv. 4) that the appointed moment arrives, for which all creation was ordained, which finds its point of union and its goal in Christ. Comp. Col. i. 16, 17, 19, 20.

11. Comp. Col. i. 9, 12.

12, 13. After Gal. iii. 14; 2 Cor. i. 22; comp. Col. i. 5. In these verses the contrast between the Jewish Christians ("we") and the Gentile Christians ("ye") is very distinct.—*Who first trusted*: "who hoped before."

14. After 2 Cor. i. 22, v. 5; Rom. viii. 16, 17, 23.

#### i. 15—23.

Thanksgiving which passes into a petition that God may cause the Gentile Christians here addressed to understand how great a thing their Christian position is, and on whom they may rely in view of the manifestation of the power of God, which is the same in them as in the Christ who has been raised from the dead and exalted by God. Another long-winded sentence, especially as it properly includes the first part of the following chapter also, as far as the end of ver. 10.

15—17 = Col. i. 3, 4, 9.

18. After 2 Cor. iv. 6; comp. Col. i. 9, 12, 27.—It is well to have some sense of the blessing of the future and of the present.

19. Comp. Col. i. 11, ii. 12.—Appeal to their own experience as a test of the greatness of the divine energy.

20—23. After 1 Cor. xv. 20, 23—28; comp. Col. i. 16—19, ii. 9, 10.

20. Comp. Col. ii. 12.

21. Comp. note on Rom. viii. 38.

22. His relation to the whole creation is the foundation of his special relation to the church, which corresponds to the relation of the head to the members of the body.

23. Here, as in ver. 10, we obtain a glimpse of the writer's world of ideas. The community is "*his body*," according to the comparison further carried out afterwards (v. 23—28), in which

especially the women appear as the bodies of the men (v. 28), and the marriage-bond as a mysterious image of the relation of Christ to the church (see note on v. 32). As the man is made complete by woman, so the church, being filled by Christ, makes him complete in its turn, and hence is *the fulness of him that filleth all in all*, inasmuch as the church represents that sphere of creation which is now filled with Christ, and from which his filling influence spreads in ever-widening circles, until, in due correspondence with his own position as the centre of the universe, it embraces the universe itself.

#### ii. 1—10.

This passage is closely connected with i. 15—23, inasmuch as what God has done to us (1—6) is now compared with what He has done to Christ (i. 20—23). Christianity is explained from the moral point of view to be a resurrection from the death of sin, similar to the resurrection of Christ and founded in it, brought about by a grand act of divine power and grace (1—6). The writer then turns back (ver. 7) to his starting-point (i. 19); while in the verses that follow (8—10) we have only an appendix occasioned by his parenthetical exclamation in ver. 5.

1 = Col. i. 21, ii. 13.—“And you also, when ye were dead in your trespasses and sins, wherein,” &c.

2. That the atmosphere was full of evil spirits and was the peculiar domain of Satan, was an idea common to Jewish and Greek teachers of the time, as may be proved by many passages in their writings. Comp. Col. iii. 6.

3. Comp. Col. i. 13, 21, iii. 7.—*Conversation*: “conduct.”—*The mind* should be “our thoughts,” i.e. ideas and designs which have their source in the flesh.—“Children [not *the children*] of wrath:” subject to the Divine wrath. After Rom. i. 18.—*By nature*: after Gal. ii. 15. Here, however, the writer goes beyond the passage in Galatians, and maintains that even “we” (who are Jews by birth) are sinners by nature, i.e. apart from the covenant, of which circumcision, which was something added to the natural state, was a pledge, and so are in the same position as “you” (who are Gentiles by birth).

4. Here the thought of ver. 1, which has been almost lost, is taken up again.



5 = Col. ii. 13. It is not until we reach this verse that we see the real meaning of ver. 1.

6. After Rom. vi. 6—11; Phil. iii. 20; comp. Col. ii. 12.—*Together*: “together with him.”

7. *In the ages to come*: i.e. in all future time. The future is divided, according to the writer’s ideas, into a series of “times” or “ages” (æons).

8. After Rom. iii. 24, 28.

9. After 1 Cor. i. 29.

10. After 2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15; comp. Col. i. 10, 21.—It should be noticed how the Pauline doctrine of faith, in accordance with the ideas of post-Pauline Gentile Christianity, has here been displaced by the idea of “good works,” which are expressly regarded as being incorporated in the predestination and purpose of creation in order that in the course of time they might be made manifest in individual Christians.

#### ii. 11—22.

The Gentile Christians are reminded that they were formerly alien to the commonwealth of historical salvation, and that they owe their admission entirely to the death of Christ upon the cross, which broke down the partition-wall between Israel and the nations of the world.

11. After Rom. ii. 26—29; 1 Cor. xii. 2; comp. Col. ii. 11, 13.—*Are called*: “were called” [the Greek may mean either].

12 = Col. i. 21. After Rom. ix. 4; Gal. iv. 24.—*Promise*: “the promise.”

13 = Col. i. 21, 22.

14. Comp. Col. i. 20.—The Law is called a *wall*, inasmuch as it enclosed the Jewish nation and separated it from the rest of the world.

15 = Col. ii. 14, 20.—The separation led to a thorough and unyielding hatred of the remaining nations, which they again did not hesitate to return (see note on Matt. v. 43), and hence the Law is further called *enmity*, i.e. an occasion of enmity.—The most peculiar and most pregnant of all the ideas which our author deals with is that Christ, by his reconciling death, has done away with the scrupulous customs of the Jews which were so hateful to the Gentiles, and so, by removing the cause

of enmity, has put an end to the enmity itself. This idea is based upon the Pauline doctrine of the Law and of reconciliation, especially Gal. iii. 13.

16 = Col. i. 20—22.—*In one body*: comp. iv. 4, Col. iii. 15.—*Thereby*: “through [lit. in] himself” [others translate “thereon” (i.e. on the cross)].

17. Comp. Col. i. 20. From Is. lvii. 19.

18. After Rom. v. 2.

19. *Foreigners*: settlers residing in a state without possessing the rights of citizens.

20—22. After 1 Cor. iii. 9—11, 16, 17, vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16; comp. Col. ii. 7.

20. *Prophets*: i.e. Christian prophets, as in 1 Cor. xii. 10; Acts xi. 17.—*Chief corner-stone*: from Matt. xxi. 42.

22. *Through the Spirit*: “in the Spirit” [so lit.].

### iii. 1—19.

The exhortations of chap. ii., upon which (according to iii. 3, 4) the whole Epistle turns, are confirmed by reference to Paul himself, now a prisoner, to whom the Gentiles are peculiarly indebted for their position as Christians, inasmuch as he is the bearer and herald of the mystery of the reception of the Gentiles into the divine historical plan of salvation, a mystery so important in its bearings on the human world and the higher realm of spirits alike. This section consists of two sentences (vv. 1—7 and vv. 8—12). The second, however, is only a repetition of an idea that has already been laid down four times in the first (vv. 2, 3, 5, 7), and ver. 14 recurs again directly to the incomplete sentence of ver. 1.

1 = Col. i. 23 sq.—*The prisoner of Jesus Christ*: the prisoner who belongs to Jesus; comp. iv. 1. The Epistle is supposed to be written from the same imprisonment that is spoken of in Philem. 1 and 9.

2 = Col. i. 25. After Gal. i. 13—16, ii. 7, 8.—[*Dispensation*: better, “stewardship;” same word as in i. 10, iii. 9 (see notes); here used of the administration of the grace of God entrusted to the apostle.]

3. After Gal. i. 12, ii. 2; 1 Cor. ii. 1 sqq.; comp. Rom. xvi. 25; Col. i. 26.—*Afore*: i.e. in chap. ii.

4. After 2 Cor. xi. 5, 6.—On this and the preceding verses



see pp. 2 sq. We have here a somewhat awkward attempt on the part of the writer to maintain Paul's consciousness of apostolic authority against his readers. In this attempt he entirely loses the connection with ver. 1.

5 = Col. i. 26.—*In other ages*: lit. "in other generations." In the original, these "other generations" appear partly as personal recipients of knowledge, but partly as simply a definition of the time, and hence the expression is supplemented by the words, *the sons of men*.—*As it is now revealed*: This is a favourite idea with the writer, and springs from 1 Cor. ii. 7, 9, 10; Rev. x. 7.

6. The substance of the "mystery;" after Gal. iii. 29; Rom. iv. 12—16.

7 = Col. i. 25, 29.

8. After 1 Cor. xv. 9, 10; Gal. i. 16; Rom. ix. 23, xi. 33.—*Less than the least*: "the very least." [*Is given* should be "was given."]

9 = Col. iii. 3. After 1 Cor. ii. 1, 7.—*Fellowship* should be "administration," or "disposition;" see note on i. 10.—*From the beginning of the world*: lit. "from the æons;" see note on ii. 7. According to our writer, as also according to 1 Pet. i. 12; 2 Pet. i. 20 sq., even the prophets of the Old Testament had themselves no objective consciousness of the subject of their own prophecies; comp. Col. i. 26—28, ii. 3.—The concluding words, "through Jesus Christ," are probably a later addition.

10. *By the church*: Even the celestial powers mentioned in i. 21 first learn the substance of the divine mystery "from the community" (lit. "through the community"); that is to say, they are instructed in it by the fact of the existence of a universal church formed of Jews and Gentiles; comp. Col. ii. 15. We find some similar ideas in 1 Pet. i. 12.

11. *The eternal purpose*: This is the meaning of the writer's words, which are literally, "The purpose of the æons." It was so ordained in God's eternal scheme of the universe.

12. After Rom. v. 2.—*Faith of him*: "faith in him."

13. *Wherefore*: Because that which has been described in vv. 8—12 was brought about through him. After 2 Cor. iv. 16, vii. 4; comp. Col. i. 24. It is the glory of the Gentile Christians before God and man, that such a man as Paul suffers for them.

14. After Rom. xi. 4, xiv. 11.—*For this cause*: repeated from

ver. 1 in order to catch up the thread again, which was dropped in that verse.—Here also (as in ver. 9) the words, *of our Lord Jesus Christ*, are not found in the oldest MSS.

15. After 1 Cor. viii. 5 sq.—This verse is difficult to translate on account of the play upon words in the Greek. “The Father [Greek, *pater*] from whom every tribe [Greek, *patria*] in heaven and earth is named.” [The word *patria* is itself a difficult one to render satisfactorily here by any one English word. It is used in the various senses of *family*, *tribe* and *nation*, and here refers probably to the various nations of the earth and tribes or races of celestial beings, each being called a *patria*, from the one *pater* of all.]

16. After Rom. ix. 23, vii. 22; 2 Cor. iv. 16; comp. Col. i. 11.

17. Comp. Col. i. 23.

18. Comp. Col. ii. 2, 7.—*The breadth*, &c.: It is not said what breadth, &c., is meant, as what is intended is the loftiest breadth, &c., conceivable, inasmuch as the contents of the divine mystery which are thus described are infinite.

19. After 1 Cor. ii. 14, viii. 1, xiii. 2, 8; Phil. iv. 7; comp. Col. ii. 3, 10.—*The love of Christ which passeth knowledge*: i.e. that ye may know that Christ’s love surpasseth all knowledge. It is important to observe in regard to the purpose of the Epistle, which is the “knowledge” (of Christ), that one should also be required to “know” how the value of knowledge sinks before the love of Christ.—*With all the fulness of God* should be “unto the whole fulness of God.” As God (according to Col. i. 19, ii. 9) entirely fills Christ, so, Christ filling the believing community (i. 23), this same fulness of God indirectly dwells in it also.

### iii. 20, 21.

The discourse having returned (ver. 19) to its starting-point (i. 17—19), a conclusion now follows to the same effect as the opening doxology (i. 3—14). Comp. Col. i. 29.

21. *By Christ Jesus*: “in Christ Jesus.”—*Throughout all ages, world without end*: lit. “to all generations of the æon of the æons.”

### iv. 1—16.

The nature of the new communion into which the readers have passed requires loving conduct of individuals towards



each other, worthy of the grand unity of the body of Christ, and preserving it (1—6). And it further requires a striving after Christian perfection, which shall tend to the good of the whole by the mutual co-operation of all (7—16).

1 = Col. i. 10. After 1 Thess. ii. 12; Rom. xii. 1.—*Of the Lord*: “in the Lord” [so lit.].

2 = Col. iii. 12, 13.

3 = Col. iii. 14. After Rom. xiii. 10.

4 = Col. iii. 15. After 1 Cor. x. 17, xii. 4; Rom. xii. 5.

5. After 1 Cor. i. 13, viii. 6, xii. 5.

6. After 1 Cor. viii. 6, xii. 6; Rom. iii. 30.—[*You*: not found in the best MSS.]

7. After Rom. xii. 3—6; 1 Cor. xii. 7—11.

8. Psalm lxviii. 19, from the Greek version. The writer, however, departs from his authority, inasmuch as both Greek and Hebrew speak of the receipt of gifts, while here we have, “*gave gifts*.” It was only by means of such an alteration that a passage in the Old Testament describing the victorious return of the God of the covenant to Zion, could be applied to the ascension of Christ and the distribution of the various divine gifts.

9. Interpretation of the passage just quoted from the Psalms. Ascent presupposes descent. A descent *into the lower parts of the earth* corresponds with the ascent *above all heavens* (ver. 10). Probably what is meant is the so-called “descent into hell,” which appears again in 1 Pet. iii. 19.

10. *That he might fill all things*: see note on i. 23.—The writer is thinking of “those in heaven and on earth and under the earth” (Phil. ii. 10), a fantastic development of his favourite idea of Christ as the central point of the universe.

11. After 1 Cor. xii. 28; Rom. xii. 6—8.—[*Gave some, apostles, &c.*: i.e. appointed some to be apostles, &c.]—*Prophets*: see note on ii. 20.—*Evangelists*: see Acts xxi. 8.—*Pastors*: as in Acts xx. 28 [where the writer speaks of the *flock*, though he uses the word “overseer,” not “shepherd” as here].

12. After 1 Cor. xiv. 26; 2 Cor. xii. 19.—*Ministry*: i.e. “service.”

13. [*In the unity* should be “into the unity.”]—*Stature* should be “age.”—The growth of the individual Christians to the measure of the age *of the fulness of Christ*, i.e. of the church (i. 23),

and so the gradual approach of the actual perfecting of the individual members to the ideal perfection of the whole, is only another aspect of the being "filled unto the whole fulness of God" described in iii. 19.

14. Comp. Col. ii. 8. The church is here on the very point of delivering itself and its doctrine, which was then in accordance with average current ideas, from the seething turmoil of factions and parties.

15. *The head*: see note on i. 22.

16 = Col. ii. 19; comp. Col. ii. 2. After Rom. xii. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 12. Literally translated, this verse would read, "From whom the whole body fitly joined together, and knit together through every contact of the assistance, according to the working in the measure of each several part, completes the growth of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." The illustration is of a connected whole consisting of various members. The parts, which are calculated and adapted for one another, mutually hold out a helping hand to one another as it were; while the whole draws from the head a life which passes from one point of contact to another, so that each several member is proportionately nourished and developed, and at the same time the whole flourishes and progresses towards a more and more complete maturity.

#### iv. 17—24.

The present conduct of the Gentile Christians must be the very opposite to their former heathen conduct. This new series of exhortations is introduced (17—19) by a sketch of the moral state of the Gentile world, after Rom. i. 21, 22, 24.

17. Comp. Col. ii. 4, 6.

18. Comp. Col. i. 21.

19 = Col. iii. 5.

20. Comp. Col. ii. 6.

21. Comp. Col. ii. 7.—*By him*: "in him."

22—24 = Col. iii. 9—11. After Rom. vi. 4, 6, xii. 2, xiii. 12, 14; 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54; 2 Cor. iv. 16, v. 17, xi. 3; Gal. iii. 27, vi. 15; 1 Thess. v. 8.

22. *Conversation*: i.e. "conduct."

#### iv. 25—v. 20.

After the general exhortation, the writer descends to individual virtues and vices, especially forbidding from first to last all con-



tact with heathen abominations and requiring a strict watch upon self. We have here a kind of Christian table of ten commandments. The first table (vv. 25—31) contains about five.

iv. 25—32. *The first table.*

**25.** *Members one of another:* after Rom. xii. 5. Falsehood makes the existence of any real communion impossible. Comp. Col. iii. 9.

**26.** From Ps. iv. 4, which our author takes to mean, "If ye be angry, sin not about it." Comp. Col. iii. 8.

**27.** After Rom. xii. 19. This verse is connected with the preceding one. He who surrenders himself to anger is in danger (according to Gen. iv. 7) of throwing open the door to the power of the evil one.

**28.** After 1 Cor. iv. 12; 1 Thess. iv. 11; Rom. ii. 10; Gal. vi. 10.

**29** = Col. iv. 6.—*That which is good to the use of edifying*, should be "That which is good for edifying as required," i.e. as required by moral and religious necessities.

**30.** *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God:* As the Spirit dwells in the community, this would be done by any conversation that served to corrupt the community.—*Sealed:* after 2 Cor. i. 22.

**31.** After Rom. ii. 8; Gal. v. 20; comp. Col. iii. 8.

**32** = Col. iii. 12, 13.—*For Christ's sake:* "in Christ" [so lit.].

v. 1—20. *The second table.*

About five more commandments follow here as a second table.

**1.** After 1 Cor. iv. 14, 16; comp. Col. iii. 12.

**2.** After Gal. ii. 20; Phil. iv. 18; comp. Col. iii. 13.—*Us:* many good MSS. read "you."—*For a sweet smelling savour:* ancient sacred phraseology; see Lev. i. 9.

**3** = Col. iii. 5. After Rom. i. 24, 29; 1 Cor. vi. 18; 2 Cor. xii. 21; Gal. v. 19; 1 Thess. ii. 3, iv. 3, 6, 7.

**4** = Col. iii. 8. After Rom. i. 28.

**5.** After Gal. v. 21; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

**6** = Col. iii. 6; comp. Col. ii. 4, 8. After Rom. i. 18.

**7.** After 2 Cor. vi. 14.

**8.** After 1 Thess. v. 5; Rom. xiii. 12; comp. Col. iii. 7.—*Sometimes*, should be "formerly."

9. After Gal. v. 22.—Read, “For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness,” &c.

10. After Rom. xii. 2.

11. After 2 Cor. vi. 14; Rom. xiii. 12.

12. After Rom. xiii. 13.

13. A development of the thought found in John iii. 20, 21.—*Whatsoever doth make manifest*: “everything that is made manifest.”

14. After Rom. xiii. 11. This passage as quoted is not to be found anywhere in the Old Testament. Probably it is a poetical working up of Ps. xlv. 23; Is. xxvi. 19, 21, li. 17, lii. 1, lx. 1, 2.

15, 16 = Col. iv. 5. After Rom. xiii. 13; 1 Cor. viii. 9.—*Redeeming the time*: i.e. buying up the time. The same thing that is spoken of in Dan. ii. 8 as “gaining the time,” i.e. making the most of the present moment.

17. After Rom. xii. 2; 2 Cor. xii. 11.

18. After Rom. xiii. 13.—*Excess*: “debauchery.”

19 = Col. iii. 16. Religious enthusiasm.—*Yourselves*: “one another.”

20 = Col. iii. 17; comp. note on 1 Thess. v. 17, 18.

#### v. 21—vi. 9. *The table of domestic law.*

Over and above the general Christian virtues just enumerated, the natural social relations must also find their due value in Christianity, and be consecrated by it.

#### 21. *General superscription.*

[If we take this verse as the heading to what follows, instead of the conclusion of what has preceded, we must place a full stop after ver. 20. In addition to other reasons for taking it so, may be noted the fact that the verb “submit” is not in the best MSS. in ver. 22, the sense being apparently carried on from ver. 21.]—*God*: All the good MSS. read “Christ.”

#### v. 22—31. *The relation between man and wife.*

22—31 = Col. iii. 18, 19.—We find a very different view of this relation in 1 Cor. vii. 2.

23. After 1 Cor. xi. 3; comp. note on i. 23.—*Of the body*: i.e. of the community which he redeems and sanctifies.

26. After Heb. xiii. 12.—Read, “That he might sanctify it



by the word after he had cleansed it by the washing of water.”—A distinction is drawn between the cleansing from ancient guilt (the effect of baptism) and the rendering capable of new holy conduct (the effect of the Word, as in John xv. 3).

27. After 2 Cor. xi. 2.—*Without blemish*: “blameless.”

28. See note on i. 23.

29. After 1 Thess. ii. 7.

30. After Rom. xii. 5; 1 Cor. vi. 15.—*Of his flesh and of his bones*: Not found in the best and oldest MSS.

31. Quotation of Gen. ii. 24; after 1 Cor. vi. 16.

#### v. 32, 33.

32. The whole view of the relation of Christ to the world and the church as set forth in the Epistle is summed up in this illustration. Hence this is spoken of as the “great mystery” [lit. “This mystery is great”]. See note on i. 23.

33. Return to the main idea, and summing up.

#### vi. 1—4. *Relation between parents and children.*

1—4 = Col. iii. 20, 21.

2, 3. From Exod. xx. 12 and Deut. v. 16. The writer seems to have regarded Exod. xx. 6 = Deut. v. 10 as not exactly a promise, but only a general statement of God’s justice. Hence he calls this *the first commandment with promise*.

4. *Nurture*: “discipline.”

#### vi. 5—9. *Relation between masters and servants.*

5—9 = Col. iii. 22—iv. 1. After 1 Cor. vii. 22.

9. *Your master also* should be “both their and your master.”

#### vi. 10—20. *Final exhortation.*

The Christian must not only live in Christian fashion, but he must also pray continually, and wage incessant war with the hostile powers of an impious world of spirits.

10. After 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

#### vi. 11—17. *The spiritual armoury.*

After 1 Thess. v. 8; 2 Cor. x. 4; based upon Is. lix. 17.

12. Comp. note on ii. 2.—[*Rulers*: lit. “world rulers.—*The darkness of this world*: The best MSS. read “this darkness.”—*Spiritual wickedness in high places*: lit. “the spiritual things of wickedness in the heavenly (places).”]

13. *In the evil day*: The writer, living at the beginning of the times of systematic persecution of Christianity by the Roman civil power, looks for a crisis when all the collective powers of evil will turn with fiendish defiance and spite against the church. It is to this final crisis that his "call to arms" applies.

16. *The wicked*: "the wicked one" [so the Greek].

vi. 18—20.

18 = Col. iv. 2. The way to obtain such weapons is here described; after Rom. xii. 12; Phil. iv. 6.—*Always*: see note on 1 Thess. v. 17.

19 = Col. iv. 3. After 2 Cor. vi. 11.

20 = Col. iv. 3, 4. After 2 Cor. v. 20.

vi. 21—24.

21, 22 = Col. iv. 7, 8.

23, 24. Peculiar conclusion; after 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

24. *In sincerity* should be "in incorruption" or "imperishably."



## THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

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THIS is the swan-song of the apostle. It is addressed to the community at Philippi, which had been founded about ten years previously, when his hopeful missionary spirit first led him into Europe.

Philippi, an important and flourishing city of Macedonia, was the first place in Europe where Paul preached the gospel (Acts xvi. 9 sqq.), and this was on his second missionary journey (A.D. 53). Though his labours there were of short duration, and were broken off by the cruel ill-treatment to which he was subjected, yet his teachings had taken root among the Jews and still more among the Gentiles, and from the root that remained there soon sprang a vigorous Christian community. Like its founder, the community was subject to severe trials, but it met them all with unshaken firmness, distinguished itself by the good spirit which it manifested, and retained a deep affection for the apostle, which was shown by the fact that they several times sent assistance to him (Phil. iv. 14 sq.). On his third missionary journey, as he returned from Greece, he paid another visit to the community which was so dear to him (Acts xx. 6), a visit which, we cannot doubt, exerted a happy influence upon the community in confirming their faith and giving new life to the friendly relation that existed between them and the apostle. In fact, the community at Philippi maintained throughout a deep, heartfelt devotion to Paul. Hearing of his imprisonment in Rome, and rightly supposing that he might find himself in somewhat straitened circumstances there, they again sent to him a gift as a

token of their love for him, which was conveyed by one of the members of the community, Epaphroditus, and which the apostle received with grateful joy (iv. 16). Epaphroditus while in Rome was overtaken by a serious illness, and on his recovery felt a yearning desire to return home, a desire which Paul was the less inclined to resist because he had reason for suspecting that the Philippians were themselves very anxious about him (ii. 25 sqq.).

The Epistle which Paul gave to Epaphroditus to take back with him relates partly to the accounts which he had received from him of the state of the community, and partly to the circumstances in which the apostle himself was at that time placed.

In regard to the affairs of the Philippians, Paul expresses his satisfaction and joy that they have been steadfast in their faith (i. 3 sq.). If there had been some disturbances of the harmony of the community, this had not been caused by the introduction of erroneous doctrines. It is evident from the whole Epistle that the conception of the gospel which Paul had set before them had retained its supremacy. At the same time the apostle considered it necessary to exhort his readers to harmony and humility (ii. 1 sqq., iv. 2 sqq.), and to warn them against the proceedings of teachers disposed to Judaism in other places, in order to induce them to keep out their intrigues (iii. 2 sqq.).

Of his own state he speaks, now with gloomy forebodings, now with the expectation of speedy deliverance (i. 19 sqq., ii. 23), and even in the hope of soon seeing the Philippians again (i. 26, ii. 24). He further informs them that his imprisonment has not prevented him from labouring with success for the gospel, and that, roused by his example, some of the brethren are preaching Christ with renewed zeal, though not always from the purest motives (i. 12 sqq.). He promises to send his beloved Timothy to them as soon as he can see what course his own trial will take (ii. 19 sqq.). He acknowledges the receipt of the assistance which they have sent him by Epaphroditus, expressing his joy that they have been so unceasingly careful for him with such tender affection (iv. 10 sqq.).



The whole Epistle bears the stamp of the intimate relation which existed between Paul and the Philippians, and the deep love which he felt for them. Moreover, it is strictly an "occasional" Epistle. Though not without order in its arrangement (see Commentary), it does not follow strictly any definite line of argument or statement, and it shows us an entirely new side of the apostle's literary activity. We see in it unrestricted converse with his readers, in which he allows himself free play, and, putting aside his apostolic authority, talks of his despondency and his inner happiness, his weariness and his hopes, as a friend with his most intimate friends.

This style of composition, which might naturally be expected considering the persons concerned and the circumstances in which the Epistle is written, also affords a sufficient explanation of the objections which have been raised to the *Pauline authorship* of the Epistle to the Philippians. The want of a strict connection between the parts of the Epistle is fully explained by the very fact that it is written in this epistolary form in the strict sense of the word. If it be urged that the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, while also written in this form, has still so much more serious, severe and imposing a tone and style, it may justly be maintained, on the other hand, that an Epistle of reproof and admonition addressed to a Christian community which was then in a most critical position, and in which personal attacks of all kinds had been made upon the apostle himself, must of course make a very different impression from that made by a letter of thanks addressed to a community that had never swerved in its fidelity.—The epistolary character of the composition also explains Paul's change of tone in regard to his Jewish-Christian opponents. This change cannot of course be denied when we compare i. 15—18 with iii. 2 sq. The apostle, annoyed at the continual repetition of the same thing on the part of his Jewish opponents, makes use of expressions of violent displeasure (iii. 2 sq.), and yet in another passage (i. 15—18) shows that he no longer fears anything to speak of even from these Jewish

Christians, and judges even their by no means immaculate preaching of Christ less passionately than he has elsewhere done. But after all, when we consider first the long and wearisome struggles which he had had with these opponents, some of whom at least were so very inferior to him, and then the present actual establishment of his gospel in security against *all* opponents, both passages are equally intelligible. And, moreover, in both passages it is ultimately the very same charge that he brings against his opponents, the charge of personal untruthfulness and of selfishness—in a word, the charge of insincerity.

The remaining doubts which have been raised as to the authenticity of the Epistle are of comparatively little weight. That the passage, ii. 6 sq., concerning Christ, has reference to Gnostic errors, and must therefore be of later origin, is a conjecture which may almost be said to have been finally disposed of. Closer acquaintance with the Gnostic systems shows that the words have no very certain position there; probably they are only a peculiar expression of the later Pauline Christology which we find, for example, 2 Cor. viii. 9, &c. Phil. iii. 11 is not the expression of a doubt as to the resurrection of the dead, but whether the apostle himself will live to see the return of Christ. Is the apostle growing old and feeble? men asked one another doubtfully. And the answer is given by the apostle himself (i. 21—26) in a description of his own feelings which bears no marks of internal improbability.



## THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

### i. 1—ii. 18.

The prisoner Paul testifies to the Philippians that in joyful remembrance of them he thanks God, and beseeches Him further to perfect them. He gives them news of his imprisonment which will calm their anxiety on his account, and exhorts them to steadfastness and harmony.

#### i. 1, 2. *Address and greeting.*

Timothy was known to the Philippians. He had assisted in their conversion (Acts xvi. 1 sq., 10 sq., xix. 22 sq.). As he was at this time staying with Paul in Rome, and the apostle intended shortly to send him to Philippi (ii. 19), Paul feels it right to send his Epistle not only in his own name but also in that of his fellow-labourer.—*Saints*: well known as an appellation of the Christians in the apostolic age, as being dedicated to God.—*Bishops*: the overseers of the community, also called “elders.”—*Deacons*: see Acts. vi. 1 sq.

#### i. 3—11. *Thanksgiving.*

4, 5. *Making request*, &c., should be “making my prayer with joy, because of your fellowship in regard to the gospel,” &c., i.e. because of the harmony and unity which prevailed among the Philippians in their faith in the gospel and their confession of it.

6. What the apostle here calls *a good work* is the same that he has just spoken of as fellowship in regard to the gospel.

7. *Because I have you*, &c., should be “because I have you in my heart in my bonds and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, as being all partakers with me of the grace.”—*My grace*, of which Paul speaks here, is the grace which God has shown him in holding him worthy to be in bonds for the gospel, and to defend it and confirm it. The Philippians had been

made companions in this by their unanimity and fidelity in the confession of the gospel, which has just been held up by him to admiration.

8. *In the bowels* (or, as we should say, “in the heart”) *of Jesus Christ*: i.e. in the love of Christ. In virtue of the deep spiritual communion in which the apostle lived with Christ, he could say that his love was Christ’s love, and conversely that Christ’s love was his.

9. Springing from the belief in Christian truth, Christian love becomes the more sincere and effectual in proportion to the illumination and the depth of the knowledge of this truth.

10. *Approve things that are excellent*: “prove what is the best” [lit. “prove (or approve) the things that differ,” or perhaps “the things that make a difference”].

11. *Righteousness*: here, as often in the New Testament, the whole moral disposition of the Christian.

i. 12—26. *Some account of himself, of the results of his labours, and of his own feelings.*

12. *Rather*: lit. “more,” i.e. more than one would have expected.

13. Read, “So that my bonds have become manifest in Christ in the whole prætorium and to all the rest.”—“Manifest in Christ:” i.e. it has become manifest that I am in bonds, not on account of any crime, but for Christ’s sake.—“Prætorium:” the quarters of the imperial body-guard, to whose chief officer Paul had been handed over on his arrival in Rome (Acts xxviii. 16).—“All the rest:” i.e. many who did not live in these barracks. The apostle was allowed to converse freely with those who visited him (Acts xxviii. 30).

15. In Rome, as elsewhere, there were Jewish Christians who would not acknowledge the apostolic rank of Paul, who did not approve of his manner of teaching the gospel, and who therefore sought to depreciate him among the Roman Christians, and, on the other hand, to establish themselves in all the higher reputation.

16. Read, “They that are led by factiousness preach Christ not from pure motives,” &c.

17. *Love*: i.e. love to the apostle.



[16, 17. The reading of the best MSS. is, "Some of love knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel; but others of contention preach Christ not sincerely (i.e. not from pure motives), thinking to raise up affliction to my bonds."]

18. Here we see the noble view which the apostle takes. He rejoices over the preaching of the gospel, even when it is caused by motives of hostility to himself, and is carried on in a very different spirit from his own.

19, 20. Paul was convinced that his circumstances in Rome, as they had turned out, and would further turn out, would tend to his salvation, inasmuch as he, whether preserved alive or delivered up to a martyr's death, will fearlessly and with his old boldness preach and glorify Christ. Still his friends must assist by their prayers and by imploring the descent of the Holy Spirit.

19. *Supply* should be "support."

21. To the apostle Christ appeared as the end and aim of his whole life. Hence he is convinced that his prolonged continuance in life will serve to the glorification of Christ. But while he surrenders himself to this thought, the feeling rises within him that death would be a gain to him. By it he would be exalted to the complete and blessed union with Christ. Hence he was, as he says in the next verse, uncertain whether it would be better for him to die or to continue to live.

22. "But if to live in the flesh serve to make more fruit [lit. "But if to live in the flesh, this is to me fruit of labour"], then I know not which I shall choose."—"To make more fruit," i.e. by the prolongation of his apostolic activity.

23. Read, "But I am oppressed by both, having a desire," &c.

24. *For you*: "on your account."

25. *And having this confidence I know*: "And I know with confidence."—For your furtherance (i.e. in Christian perfection) and the heightening of your joy which springs from faith (your inner bliss).

26. Read, "So that your ground of boasting in Christ Jesus may be made great through me, by means of my dwelling among you again." The increase of the boasting of the Philippians in Christ Jesus was to be brought about by means of the furtherance of their faith and of their inner blessedness which was to be brought about by Paul on his return.

## i. 27—ii. 18.

A fatherly exhortation to united action in the rejection of adversaries, and at the same time to union among themselves based upon humility, of which Christ is the type—now the glorified type—and also upon the common labour for their own sanctification and salvation.

## i. 27—ii. 4.

27. [Conversation, i.e. “conduct;” lit. “Only live as citizens worthily of the gospel of Christ.”]—*With one mind*, &c., should be “with one soul contending together with us for the faith in the gospel.”

28. The *adversaries* which the apostle here has in his mind are not false teachers with Jewish tendencies, but opponents of Christianity, both Jews and Gentiles. In the invincible steadfastness with which the Christians resist them, they ought to see a divine sign of the judgment which is in store for them. The Christians, on the other hand, ought to see in it a sign of the salvation prepared for them.

29. Read, “For upon you has the grace (or favour) been bestowed, not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for him.”—The Philippians should regard the sufferings for Christ’s sake, to which they are exposed, as a gift of God’s grace, inasmuch as the steadfast endurance of them was bringing them to eternal salvation.

## ii. 1—4.

The apostle endeavours to excite in the Philippians everything that could cause them to give him joy by the preservation of peace and unity among themselves. He appeals to the union with Christ which should arouse them to this, to the love which is always ready to give comfort, to the fellowship of the spirit in which they stand, or at any rate should stand, with him and one another, and to the sympathy and mercy which he assumes to be in their hearts.

1. *Consolation*: “exhortation.”—[*Bowels*: i.e. “kind feeling,” as we say, “heart.”]

2. Read, “Make my joy complete,” &c.

3. *Strife* should be “contentiousness.”—Disunion and a contentious disposition often arise from vanity, especially when, as seems to have been the case in Philippi, they proceed not so



much from difference of religious opinion as from pride and the self-exaltation of one over another. This is the reason why the apostle adds to his exhortation to unity, a further exhortation to humility and self-denial, enforcing it by an appeal to the example of Christ.

ii. 5—11.

For the proper understanding of this passage we must remember that, while in the first three Gospels and the Book of Acts Christ appears as a man, only distinguished from other men by the possession of the Holy Spirit in all its fulness and permanently, Paul, with the Fourth Gospel, the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Revelation of John, regarded Christ as the highest of all heavenly beings, endowed with divine perfections, and hence an image of God, who during his pre-mundane existence became, by commission of God, the creator of the visible and invisible world, who at the time appointed by God appeared upon earth in the nature of a man for the purpose of the redemption and reconciliation of men, and who after the completion of his work was exalted by God to the highest degree of power, honour and glory (1 Cor. xv. 45; 2 Cor. iv. 4, viii. 9; comp. also Col. i. 15 sq., ii. 3, 9, 10; Eph. iv. 8 sq.)

6—8. Read, "Who being in divine form [lit. in the shape (or image) of God], esteemed it not a robbery to be equal with God, but divested himself [lit. emptied himself], taking the form of a servant, after he had become as a man, and being found in outward appearance as a man, humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even unto death upon the cross."

6. This refers to the pre-mundane existence of Christ. He was originally "in divine shape," inasmuch as, bearing within him the fulness of divine perfection (Col. ii. 9), he was an image of God (Col. i. 15), a reflection of His glory (Heb. i. 3). As the image of God, he was *equal with God*, an equality, however, which was not absolute, and did not exclude dependence upon God and subjection to Him (Phil. ii. 8, 9).—The words, "He esteemed it not a robbery to be equal with God," have been explained in various ways. They appear to mean that Christ did not violently retain his equality with God, because it naturally belonged to him, but voluntarily, in order that he might be able to fulfil the destiny which God had appointed for him, "divested" himself

of it (vv. 7, 8)—a renunciation which consisted in his refraining from revealing the divine perfection which dwelt within him, taking upon himself human nature, appearing in servile form among men, and proving obedient to the will of God, even unto death upon the cross.—Others explain as follows: Christ did not (like the first men) think of securing equality with God by robbery, but he obtained it by the voluntary renunciation of his divine form, i.e. of his “*heavenly* humanity,” even by so far renouncing it as to resemble “*ordinary* humanity,” by obedience even unto death upon the cross. There is, however, no indication in the phraseology of the passage of any contrast between Christ (as the second Adam) and the first man, nor of the distinction between heavenly and ordinary humanity.

9. Even the exaltation and glorification of Christ was the effect of divine grace. By the distinguishing name which is given to him, we must understand (as appears from ver. 11) the name of *Lord*.

10. *At the name*: “in the name” [so lit.], i.e. in remembrance of him and the exalted honour bestowed upon him by God.—*Things* should be “those.” Those “under the earth” are the dead, who, according to the ancient Christian view, were regarded as living in some place under the earth until the resurrection.

11. Christ the *Lord*, the glorious head of the church, and indeed of the whole realm of reasonable spirits. If beings endowed with reason, wherever they dwell, bow the knee in the name of Jesus, still the confession in their prayers of his exalted rank as Lord will be *to the glory of God the Father*, because this honour is bestowed upon Jesus by Him.

#### ii. 12—18.

12, 13. *But now much more*: out of consideration for the bonds which the apostle bore for Christ’s sake.—*With fear and trembling*: i.e. with a zeal which ever fears lest it should not do enough. [*To do*: or “to work;” same word as *worketh*, and similar to the word rendered “work out” in ver. 12.]—*Of his good pleasure* should be “in virtue of his good-will.”—The moral and religious development of man, which is necessary for eternal salvation, is brought about by the co-operation of human will and exertion (“*work out*,” ver. 12) and the divine helper, appearing in the depths of the spirit, who because of the infinite good-



ness of God never fails him who is able and willing to receive him. It is therefore the work of man and God alike.

14. *Disputings*: "doubts."

15. *Harmless*: "pure."

17. *If I be offered*: lit. "though I be poured out" (as a drink-offering), i.e. though my blood should have to be poured forth as that of a beast for sacrifice.—"Upon the sacrifice and worship," &c.: Paul regards the labours which he has undertaken for the sake of the faith of the Philippians as an offering of sacrifice, a religious ceremony which he has performed with a view to them.

18. However painful it would be to the Philippians if the apostle should have to suffer a martyr's death, he still desires that in another respect they should rejoice with him even at this, viz. inasmuch as he would die for the sake of the gospel and for the furtherance of their faith.

#### ii. 19—30.

*Announcement of Timothy's intended visit, and of the return of Epaphroditus, with commendation of them both.*

21. The severe sentence here pronounced by the apostle leads us to suppose that the brethren and fellow-workers who were about him when he wrote the Epistle to the Colossians and the Epistle to Philemon (Col. iv. 10, 12; Philem. 23, 24) were now no longer with him. This also explains why he sends no greeting from them (iv. 21, 22).

22. "But ye know his uprightness [lit. as in A.V., i.e. perhaps "his proved character"]; for as a child [so lit.] (serves) his father, so has he served the gospel [lit. unto the gospel] with me."

23. *Presently, as soon as I shall see*: "as soon as ever I see."

25. *I supposed it necessary*: "I considered it necessary."—Epaphroditus "ministered to the wants" of the apostle, inasmuch as he was the bearer of the assistance which the Philippians had sent to alleviate his pressing necessities.

28. *Carefully*: "quickly."—*That when, &c.*: "that when ye see him ye may rejoice again."

. 30. *For the work of Christ*: To bring necessary assistance to an apostle of the Lord might truly be regarded as a service done to Christ.—*Not regarding his life* should be "when he staked his life."—*To supply, &c.*: "that he might serve me in

your stead" [lit. "that he might supply the want of your service toward me"].

iii. 1—16. *Warning against false teachers.*

It seems as if the apostle intended to bring his Epistle to a close in the words which have immediately preceded, but found himself compelled to repeat the solemn warning which follows against false teachers of the Jewish school which he had previously given, probably in an Epistle that has been lost.

1. *For you it is safe*: i.e. it serves to confirm you.

2. That the apostle here has false teachers who are disposed to Judaism in view is very certain from what follows. If they had not found any admission among the Philippians, they were nevertheless a threatening danger.—*Dogs*: strictly "the dogs;" the impure or insincere. Dogs were regarded by the Jews as unclean animals.—*Circision*: "mutilation," a name given contemptuously to those who set an immoderate value upon their circumcision in the flesh.

3. To the *fleshly* circumcision Paul opposes the *spiritual* circumcision which should take place in every Christian.—Those serve God in the spirit who offer to the Infinite Spirit a worship which springs from the spirit that is enlightened and cleansed by the Holy Spirit.—By the *flesh*, Paul here means external qualities such as circumcision.

8. *For whom, &c.*, should be "for whose sake I have lost all these things."—All the characteristics here adduced, which the apostle had formerly regarded as advantages, afterwards appeared to him as disadvantages, because they had long kept him away from Christ; and so they still continued to appear to him.

9. *The faith of Christ*: "faith in Christ."—[*By faith*: lit. "upon faith," i.e., probably, reckoned to the believer upon the ground of his faith.]

10. Only the Christian who is in a state of righteousness by faith attains the full knowledge of Christ, and consciousness of all the peace and strength that is to be found in his resurrection. If he suffers, he feels that he is united with his Redeemer in the fellowship of his sufferings. This was the position in which Paul himself was. In the serious circumstances in which he was then placed, he regarded himself in anticipation as called to suffer a martyr's death like the death of Christ.



11. The apostle here means the resurrection of the Christians, which in his view was to be the first (1 Cor. xv. 23; 1 Thess. iv. 16).

12. Here the apostle has the contests in the Greek games in his mind. He is conscious that he has not yet attained the prize (the prize of his heavenly calling, ver. 14), i.e. he has not yet attained the Christian perfection which should make him altogether worthy of it, but he "pursues" it [A.V. *press toward*], fired by the thought that it is precisely in order that he may lay hold of it that he himself has been laid hold of by God in his marvellous conversion.

14. *High calling*: "heavenly calling" [lit. upward calling].

15. Of course Paul is not speaking here of a moral perfection that has attained its final goal, for such he has never ascribed to himself, but rather of a moral culture which makes for and approaches this goal.

16. Read, "Only, what we have attained, in that let us continue to walk and be of one mind."—The meaning of this verse is: Until those higher perceptions, which still fail us, shall have been imparted to us by revelation, let us walk in accordance with what we have so far attained in spiritual things.

iii. 17—iv. 1. *Exhortation to steadfastness.*

18. The unworthiness of which Paul here speaks is not the same which he dealt with in ver. 2 of this chapter. There he spoke of the tendencies of Jewish-Christian *doctrine*. Here it is selfishness in *practical life* that brings dishonour upon the cross of Christ.

20. *Conversation* should be "commonwealth." The word means properly the state or commonwealth, that which Paul calls the heavenly Jerusalem (Gal. iv. 26), of which the true Christians are already citizens in spirit, and shall one day be citizens in eternal reality.

iv. 2—23.

*Final exhortations to harmony, gentleness, trust in God and Christian virtue generally. Thanks for the assistance that has been sent to him.*

2. [*Euodias* should be "Euodia," a woman's name.]—The two women mentioned here and the reason of their disagreement are unknown to us.—*Beseech*: "exhort."

3. *And*: “yea” [so the best MSS.].—*Yoke-fellow*: The word thus translated is most probably a proper name, Syzygus. As the Epistle was addressed to the whole community at Philippi, Paul could not address any individual member separately without naming him.

5. *Moderation*: “gentleness.” The thought of the return of Christ, which was then supposed to be near at hand, should make the Philippians gentle in disposition and conduct.

7. *Passeth*: better “surpasseth.”—*Through*: “in” [so lit.].—By the *peace of God*, Paul understands the calmness of mind which excludes care, and is confirmed by continual prayer, which—not being produced by the understanding, but by faith and the assistance of the Holy Spirit—surpasseth understanding (John xiv. 27; Rom. xiv. 17, xv. 33; Col. iii. 15).

8. [*Just*: i.e. “righteous.”]—*Think on these things*: more strictly, “pay attention to these things.”

9. *Both*: “also.”

10. *That now at the last your care for me hath flourished again*, should be “that your circumstances have turned out so favourably that you should provide for me, though ye always cared (for me) but ye lacked opportunity.”

11. *In respect of*: “because of.”

12. *Everywhere and in all things I am instructed, &c.*, should be “in each and every circumstance I understand [lit. “I have been initiated”] both how to be full and how to be hungry, both how to abound and how to suffer want.”

[13. *Through*: lit. “in.”—Some of the best MSS. read simply, “I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me.”]

14. *That ye did, &c.*, should be “that ye took upon yourselves my distress.”

15. *No Church, &c.*, should be “no community entered into fellowship with me in an account of giving and taking except you.”—The fellowship which the apostle here speaks of consists in this, that Christian communities repay him with the means of bodily sustenance for the spiritual benefits they have received from him (1 Cor. ix. 11). He had received such support from the Philippians when he left Macedonia again in consequence of the persecution which broke out against him in Philippi, as in Thessalonica and Berea (Acts xvii. 14). But



even before this time, during his residence in Thessalonica, the Philippians had sent assistance to him. There can be no doubt that they also had a share in the support which he afterwards received from Macedonia, at the time when he was in Corinth (2 Cor. xi. 9).

17. Read, "Not that I seek after the gift, but I seek after the fruit that serves to increase your account."—The gift which they send to the apostle will bring the givers themselves fruit or profit, a balance in favour of their own account (for the day of judgment); comp. 2 Cor. ix. 6—9.

18. *I am full*: i.e. I have plenty.—*An odour of a sweet smell*: The same phrase is used in the Epistle to the Ephesians (Eph. v. 2), where it also denotes, though in a different connection, a *voluntary* sacrifice.

19. *According to*, &c., should be "by means of his wealth, gloriously, in Christ Jesus."

21, 22. [*Salute, greet*: the same word in the Greek.]—*The brethren*: the more intimate friends of Paul who were then staying with him. The other members of the Christian community in Rome are embraced under the word *saints*.—*They that are of Cæsar's household*: probably upper or under servants of the emperor (Nero).

[23. *With you all*: The best MSS. read, "with your spirit;" comp. Gal. vi. 18.]

## THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

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COLOSSÆ, or Colassæ, was a city upon the upper part of the river Lycus, in Phrygia. In the year 61 it had been destroyed, together with the neighbouring city of Laodicea, by an earthquake (see note on Matt. xxiv. 7), but, like this latter city, it had speedily recovered from this disaster. Paul had been twice in Phrygia (Acts xvi. 6, xviii. 23), but without coming into the neighbourhood of Colossæ and Laodicea, on which account he treats both these communities as personally unknown to him (ii. 1, comp. also i. 4, 9, 23). The merit of founding the community at Colossæ belonged to a Colossian of the name of Epaphras, who must have been upon terms of special intimacy with Paul (i. 7, 8, iv. 12, 13), and is acknowledged by him without reserve as a fellow-labourer (i. 4, ii. 6). The community, which had only recently been founded (i. 3—5, 9, ii. 6, 7), consisted mainly of Gentile Christians (i. 21, 27, ii. 11, 13), and was from the beginning Pauline in character. Hence the great interest which Paul takes in it (i. 9, ii. 1). Epaphras had come to Paul from Colossæ, and he probably shared for a time his imprisonment, whence in the Epistle to Philemon he is spoken of as a fellow-prisoner (Philem. 23), as is Aristarchus in our Epistle (Col. iv. 10). This imprisonment may possibly have been the imprisonment in Cæsarea, since Aristarchus and Luke (iv. 10, 14) were with the apostle there, as well as in Rome. On the other hand, the mention of Demas (iv. 14, comp. 2 Tim. iv. 10), Timothy (i. 1, comp. Phil. i. 1, ii. 19) and Mark (iv. 10, comp. 2 Tim. iv. 11), would rather lead us to look to Rome. And this latter view is espe-



cially confirmed by the distinction drawn between Gentile and Jewish teachers, from which it appears (iv. 11, which agrees with Phil. i. 15—17, iii. 2) that the number of the latter who acted in a friendly and helpful manner towards the apostle was only small. In addition to this, the comparative freedom of action assumed here (iv. 3, 11) agrees with the account of his Roman imprisonment (Acts xxviii. 30, 31).

There can be no doubt that the Epistle to the Colossians was written by the hand of Timothy (i. 1) and taken to Colossæ by Tychicus (iv. 7, 8). The occasion of it was the news brought by Epaphras, referring chiefly to the intrusion into the community of a dangerous opposition to the Pauline gospel (i. 8, 9). These opponents, however, bear only a very general resemblance to those who are dealt with in the Epistle to the Galatians (see notes on ii. 16—23). They are much more like the “weak” who are mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans (Rom. xiv. 5, 6, 21), who, starting from principles of Essenic origin, i.e. from purely human assumptions (see note on ii. 8), prohibited the use of wine and flesh (see Vol. II. pp. 39 sq., 171 sq.). But while these latter simply had scruples about themselves eating and drinking all things without distinction, the opponents of Paul’s teachings who had made their way into the communities in Colossæ and Laodicea—for the circumstances were the same in both places (ii. 1, iv. 13—16)—aimed at making this abstinence a condition of salvation for all alike (see note on ii. 21).

If our Epistle went no further than this in its description of the false teachers, then, in connection with this matter at any rate, there would be no difficulty in the way of our believing that it was written by Paul. But serious suspicions are aroused by the fact, that not only are the opponents ascetics in practice (see note on ii. 21), but, further, their doctrine is a system of angel-worship (see notes on i. 18, ii. 18). This seems to bring us down to the time of a clearly-defined gnosis, and is manifestly connected with similar ideas in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see note on ii. 15). And, moreover, the Christology of our Epistle,

which is opposed to this false Angelology (see notes on i. 14—21, ii. 9, 10), is worked out by means of the very same conceptions which we have already recognized as peculiarly characteristic of the Epistle to the Ephesians. We find again the “æons and generations” (see note on i. 26), the “head of the body” and the “fulness” (see note on ii. 9, 10, iii. 11), the “mystery” (see note on i. 27), the idea of the union of the things that have previously been divided and opposed to one another in the world (see notes on i. 20, iii. 15); and here, as in the Epistle to the Ephesians, we find a preponderance of those ideas which are connected with the intellectual aspects of Christianity, “knowledge,” “wisdom,” “understanding,” &c. Some of these ideas are applied in such a way as to come into actual contradiction of the outlines of the Pauline system as known to us from other sources (see notes on i. 16, 24). Here again, as in the Epistle to the Ephesians, we are puzzled by finding the assurance that Paul has been made a servant of the gospel and the church (i. 23), which is repeated again immediately afterwards (i. 25). Again, the disappearance of the characteristic Pauline ideas and the appearance of new watchwords proceed step by step together. The language of the Epistle, especially in the first two chapters, is pretty nearly as cumbrous and reiterative as that of the Epistle to the Ephesians. We find a similar choice of words and expressions to that which on the face of it removes the Epistle to the Ephesians from the category of the genuine remains of the apostle. The only difference between the two Epistles is, that the peculiarities of the Epistle to the Ephesians pervade the whole of it, whereas in the Epistle to the Colossians they are combined and interwoven with undoubtedly Pauline material, to which special attention will be called in the notes. In regard to the signs of unauthenticity, the Epistle to the Colossians is in part what the Epistle to the Ephesians is entirely.

To what has been already said must be added the fact that these two Epistles stand in a very peculiar literary relation to one another. Not only do they appear to have been written in



similar circumstances (see Col. iv. 7, 8 = Eph. vi. 21, 22), but they proceed *pari passu* in regard to form and contents, and are related to one another in a manner of which we have no other example in the writings of Paul, but which finds an exact parallel in the mutual relation of the first three Gospels (see Vol. I. pp. 39 sqq.). Hence we not only find serious difficulties regarding the genuineness of each Epistle separately, but, in addition to this, we are met by the great objection that it is difficult to understand how so powerful and original a mind as that of Paul could repeat itself in so poverty-stricken a fashion, as, for example, to compress all the expressions of Eph. i. 9, 18, iii. 8, 9, 16, 17, into the difficult sentence of Col. i. 27, or altogether to destroy the connection between vv. 12 and 13 in Col. iii. by placing them at the beginning and end of the chapter in the Epistle to the Ephesians (Eph. iv. 2, 3, 32). In the notes on each Epistle we have given throughout the references to the corresponding passages in the other, and thus provided a safe clue whereby to follow out this puzzle. Naturally enough, there has been no want of various solutions of it. From the fact that in the Epistle to the Ephesians (vi. 21) the writer says that "ye also" may know (what the Colossians already know), it has been inferred that the Epistle to the Colossians was written first. Then, again, from his saying in the Epistle to the Colossians (iii. 8), "ye also" should put away (what the Ephesians have already put away), it has been argued that the Epistle to the Ephesians was written first. Thus for a long time those who maintained that the Epistle to the Ephesians was the original Epistle, and those who maintained that it was based upon the Epistle to the Colossians, stood in uncompromising opposition to one another. Latterly, however, there has been an increasing number of scholars who have maintained that there is a mutual interdependence of the two Epistles, and have assumed the existence of a short original Epistle of Paul to Colossæ, which the writer of the Epistle to the Ephesians worked up into its present form, enlarging it by the introduction of ideas and expressions of his own. Such a

proceeding is by no means strange to those who are acquainted with the methods of the writers of that period and the origin of its literary productions. In the ancient church we find that this is a phenomenon of universal occurrence. In order to adapt them to the special purposes and ecclesiastical requirements of altered times and different circles of readers, writings are shortened or lengthened, or in parts completely re-written; they are, so to speak, in a continual state of transformation. As the first three Gospels resemble a leaf of clover, the three parts of which divide from a common point, which must be clearly ascertained by systematic study before it is possible to comprehend them aright, so these two Epistles form a pair similarly united; and the final interpretation of the one decides at the same time our opinion regarding the other.



## THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

i. 1, 2 = Eph. i. 1, 2.

i. 3—8.

Paul gives thanks to God for the Christian character and disposition which have developed among the Colossians as the result of the preaching of the gospel among them.

3, 4 = Eph. i. 15—17.

5. *For the hope*: The *love* mentioned in ver. 4 (i.e. the interest in the welfare of other communities, the support given to others, and the hospitality of the Colossians) has its foundation in this hope (comp. Eph. i. 3, 12, 13, 18).—*Heard before*: i.e. before “we heard,” ver. 4.

6, 7. This calling up to memory the manner in which the gospel was brought to the readers of the Epistle and became effectual in them, gives occasion to mention also the personal relation in which the readers stood to those who brought the gospel and delivered it to them.

[7. *Fellowservant . . . . minister*: more accurately, “fellow-slave . . . . servant.”]

i. 9—12.

The mission of Epaphras affords a reason for Paul also to exert himself on behalf of his readers, and this, first of all, by unceasing prayer for their spiritual increase.

9. Comp. Eph. i. 8, 11, 15—17.—*Desire*: “entreat.”

10, 11 = Eph. iv. 1 (comp. also Eph. ii. 10), i. 17, 19, iii. 16.

12. Comp. Eph. i. 11, 18.

i. 13—23.

As Paul rejoices in the progress which, under the blessing of God, the gospel has made among his readers, so it is for them to understand in all its bearings the benefit of the redemption and reconciliation obtained for them through Christ.

13. Comp. Eph. i. 6, ii. 2, 3.

14—21. Here we have the first discourse concerning the person and office of Christ, in implied though unexpressed opposition to the system of the false teachers.

14 = Eph. i. 7.—*Through his blood*: These words are not found in the best MSS.

15. According to this verse, Christ is the visible representative of the eternally invisible God in the creation to which he himself, as being also a creature (comp. Heb. iii. 2, *note*), belongs. On the other hand, indeed, as ver. 16 shows, he is eternally superior to it.

16 = Eph. i. 21, 22; comp. Eph. i. 10, iii. 9, 10.—*By him*: “through him.” [Lit. it is “in him” the first time, and “through him” the second time].—*Thrones*: The same rank of angels as the “powers” spoken of in 1 Cor. xv. 24; Rom. viii. 38.—*By him, and for him*: “Through him and to him.” This goes beyond the teaching of Paul, inasmuch as Christ is here not only the intermediate cause (“through him”), as in 1 Cor. viii. 6, but also the goal of the creation of the world (“to him”).

17. Comp. Eph. i. 10, 22.—*By him*: “in him.”—In the “first-born” God created at the same time the whole world. This reminds us in every respect of the position of the Logos in the writings of Philo and in the Fourth Gospel (see Vol. I. pp. 204 sqq.).

18 = Eph. i. 22, 23; comp. Eph. i. 20, iv. 15, v. 23. The copiousness of these definitions of Christ suggests that the opponents of the writer held a different doctrine in regard to the cause and purpose of the world, assigning a more favourable position to the various classes of angels mentioned in ver. 16, and a less favourable to Christ.

19 = Eph. i. 23; comp. Eph. i. 10.—*The Father*: these words, or simply “God,” are rightly supplied to complete the sense of the verse.—*All fulness*: i.e. of the Deity, as in ii. 9.

20 = Eph. ii. 16, i. 10; comp. Eph. i. 7, ii. 13—15, except that in the Epistle to the Ephesians it is rather the opposites upon earth (Jews and Gentiles), here the opposites in the universe (heaven and earth, angels and men), which have been united into one by the reconciling death of Christ, and so have been reconciled at the same time to one another and in him.

21 = Eph. ii. 1, 12, 13, 15, 16; comp. Eph. ii. 2, 3, 10, iv. 18.—*Sometime* should be “at one time.”



22. Comp. Eph. ii. 16; and for the second part of the verse Eph. i. 4, v. 27.

23. Comp. Eph. iii. 17, and iii. 1.

i. 24—29.

The preceding demand is supported by reference to the apostle's own labours and sufferings for the good of his readers.

24 = Eph. iii. 1, 13. As the church is, as it were, the completion of Christ (see note on Eph. i. 23), so sufferings which have been borne in its service and for its good are a continuation, supplement and completion of the sufferings of Christ. This idea is irreconcilable with Paul's fundamental idea of the death of Christ.

25 = Eph. iii. 2; comp. Eph. iii. 7, 8.—[*Dispensation*: better, "stewardship;" see note on Eph. iii. 2.]

26 = Eph. iii. 3, 5, 9.—*From ages, &c.*: lit. "from the æons and from the generations," i.e. ages and generations long.—*Is*: "has been."

27 = Eph. i. 9, 18, iii. 9.—*Would make known*: "has willed to make known."—*In you* should be "among you."—According to this verse, also, the substance of the divine mystery is "Christ among you" (i.e. among the Gentile Christians), the bringing in of the Gentiles, and the abolition of the opposition between the different nations.

28. Comp. Eph. iii. 9, iv. 13.

29. Comp. Eph. iii. 7, 20.

ii. 1—5.

The apostle puts himself in a personal relation with his hearers by assuring them of the great exertions he makes to bring those who are personally unknown to him into perfect truth.

1. According to this, the communities at Colossæ and Laodicea were personally unknown to Paul.

2.<sup>1</sup> Comp. Eph. iii. 17—iv. 16.—*Acknowledgment*: "knowledge."—*And of the Father and*: These words are not found in the best MSS., which therefore read, "the mystery of the God of Christ." [The readings here are very various; among others are, "the mystery of God, which is Christ;" "the mystery of God in Christ;" "the mystery of God, the Father of Christ;" "the mystery of the God and Father of Christ;" "the mystery of God the

Father and of Christ;” “the mystery of God;” and the reading given in A.V.]

3. Comp. Eph. iii. 9, 19.

4. *Enticing* should be “deceitful.”—This verse is directed against the false representation that the apostle cared little or nothing about the communities with which he was not personally acquainted (comp. Eph. iv. 17, v. 6).

ii. 6—15.

The apostle now passes on to the proper subject of his letter, for the sake of which it is written, viz. the warning against foreign influences, including the demand to submit to circumcision. In the first place, he establishes the fact that Christian baptism, which his readers have already accepted, represents on a higher stage of fulfilment the very same thing which circumcision was in the Old Testament, so that it would be unmeaning to wish to have both together.

6. Comp. Eph. iv. 17, 20.

7. Comp. Eph. ii. 20, iii. 17.

8. Comp. Eph. iv. 14, v. 6.—*Philosophy*: The false doctrine was based upon a definite philosophical system, according to which the whole material world was a thing opposed in its very nature to God. Hence the requirement of abstinence (vv. 16, 21).—*Tradition*: The same word that is used in Matt. xv. 2, 3 = Mark vii. 3, 5. The demands just mentioned went beyond the Law, which left men free at least to take meat and wine.—*Rudiments of the world* should be “elements of the (material and visible) universe” (see note on Gal. iv. 1—7).

9, 10. Here we have a second disquisition on the nature and office of Christ of the same character as that in i. 14—21.

9. Comp. Eph. i. 23.—The full and complete nature of God, which, according to the Gnostics, was divided among a whole kingdom of spirits (the “æons”), dwells in Christ; and, moreover, dwells in him *bodily*; that is to say, either that Christ, living in the body, embraces within himself all that makes God, who is the Spirit, to be God; or else that the fulness of the Godhead dwells in him *bodily*, as distinguished from the *shadows* of the Old Testament mentioned in ver. 17.

10. *Complete* should be “filled;” i.e., as in Eph. iii. 19, “unto all the fulness of God.” As God completely fills Christ, so the



members of the community share in this fulness inasmuch as they are members of his body (comp. Eph. i. 23).—*Head*: of all angelic powers, as in Eph. i. 21. On the purpose of this statement, see note on i. 18.

11. *The body of the sins of the flesh* should be “the body of the flesh.”—The circumcision “made with hands” is the earthly type of the process “not made with hands” (comp. 2 Cor. v. 1) which takes place in baptism, and which is here called the “putting off the body of the flesh” (comp. Rom. vi. 4). This is the “circumcision of Christ” (comp. Eph. ii. 11).

12. Comp. Eph. ii. 6, i. 20.—*Faith of the operation* should be “faith in the operation.”

13 = Eph. ii. 5; comp. Eph. ii. 1, 4, 11.

14 = Eph. ii. 15, 16.—*Of ordinances*: This shows that *the handwriting* is “the Law.”—This verse is practically equivalent to Gal. iii. 13.

15. *Spoiled*: i.e. stripped of their armour and power.—*In it* should be “in him.”—The contents of this verse are connected with Eph. ii. 15, 16, iii. 10, iv. 8. “In him,” i.e. by the result of Christ’s cause upon earth, God has solemnized an open triumph before the world over the spiritual powers which bore sway among the Gentiles, and made a spectacle of them in all their emptiness and unreality before those who had hitherto been their servants and adherents.

#### ii. 16—23.

More detailed description and refutation of the false doctrines, the natural wisdom and human precepts of which, with their various additional mediations between man and God, have been left far behind by those believers who hold fast to the Head.

16. Just the same as Gal. iv. 10; Rom. xiv. 2 sq., 17.

17. The same as Heb. viii. 5, ix. 9—11, x. 1.

18. The text of this verse is somewhat obscure and doubtful. The idea of the false teachers is that man, whose origin is earthly and material, occupies too humble a position to have direct intercourse with God, and therefore requires the mediation of angelic powers.—*Beguile you of your reward* should be “decide against you in regard to your prize.”

19 = Eph. iv. 15, 16.

20. Exactly the same thing as in Rom. vi. 2, 6—11, vii. 4—6;

Gal. ii. 19, 20, iv. 3, 8—10; comp. Eph. ii. 15.—*Rudiments of the world* should be “elements of the (materially visible) universe.”

21. The precepts here adduced as those of the opponents show us that they were persons who sought to bring about the emancipation of the spirit from the fetters of the body by a consistent enfeebling and mortification of the latter (“ascetics”), and who, with a view to this, introduced distinctions in regard to different kinds of food just like those observed by the “weak” who are spoken of in Rom. xiv.—[*Touch not*, &c.: more exactly, “Handle not (lit. “grasp not”), taste not, touch not.”]

22, 23. The construction here is difficult. The general sense is that of the A.V.—*Will worship* should be “arbitrary service.” On this and “humility,” see note on ver. 18 and p. 36. The sense of these two verses is practically the same as that of 1 Cor. vi. 13.—*Neglecting of the body*: “not sparing the body” [so lit., i.e. treating it with harshness and severity].

### iii. 1—11.

Instead of expecting salvation from any arbitrary self-mortification, the readers of the Epistle are to seek after communion with the super-mundane Christ, and divest themselves of everything that militates against this.

1, 2. Comp. Eph. ii. 6, i. 20.

3=Eph. iii. 9. Exactly the same as Rom. vi. 8—11, vii. 4; Gal. ii. 19, 20.

4. Comp. Eph. i. 18.—*Our*: “your” [the MSS. are divided].

5—7=Eph. ii. 2, 3, iv. 19, v. 3, 5, 6, 8.

7. Read, “Among whom ye also formerly walked.”

8—10. After Eph. iv. 22—26, 29, 31, v. 4.

10. *Is renewed in knowledge*: “is being renewed unto the knowledge.” The fact that emphasis is laid upon this particular point, corresponds with what has been said (pp. 36 sq.) of the writer’s apprehension of Christianity from the intellectual side.

11. *Christ is all and in all*: so that he “filleth” all, as in Eph. i. 23.

### iii. 12—17.

Commands as to the things that are to be “put on,” corresponding with the prohibitions regarding things that are to be “put off” (vv. 5—9). The opposition between the old man and the



new man set forth in vv. 10, 11, forms a suitable transition from the negations to the affirmations.

12, 13 = Eph. iv. 2, 32, v. 1, 2.—*Bowels of mercies*: “heartfelt pity.”

14 = Eph. iv. 3.

15 = Eph. iv. 4; comp. Eph. ii. 16.—*Peace of God*: The best authorities read, “peace of Christ.”—*In one body*: Because the tendency of Christ’s calling was to establish unity in the world.

16 = Eph. v. 19. Read, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Teach and admonish yourselves [or “one another”] in all wisdom, with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and sing of his grace [lit. “in grace”] unto the Lord [or “unto God,” according to the best MSS.] in your hearts.”

17 = Eph. v. 20. Contrast to the distinctions of kinds of food made by the false teachers (ii. 16, 21), just the same as in 1 Cor. x. 29—31.

### iii. 18—iv. 1. *The domestic table of commandments.*

Instead of applying themselves to the pursuit of an extraordinary and romantic sanctity, the Colossians should rather have a due regard for the social relations of ordinary life.

18 = Eph. v. 22, 24.—[There is scarcely any MSS. authority for the word *own* in this verse.]

19 = Eph. v. 25, 28.

20 = Eph. vi. 1.

21 = Eph. vi. 4.—*Provoke not*: i.e. by excessive strictness that finds fault with everything, or by a passionate disposition on the part of the parent.

22—25 = Eph. vi. 5—8.—The apostle has reasons for specially developing this particular point (comp. Introduction to the Epistle to Philemon).

25. *Receive for the wrong*: “receive the wrong” [so lit.].

iv. 1 = Eph. vi. 9.

iv. 2—4 = Eph. vi. 18—20.

A request for this intercession strengthens the spiritual bond between the apostle and his readers.

3. *Door of utterance* (lit. “door of the word”): i.e. opportunity of preaching the gospel.

iv. 5, 6 = Eph. iv. 29, v. 15, 16, vi. 20.

Regulation of their conduct in relation to the Gentiles by whom they are surrounded.

5. *Redeeming the time*: lit. "buying up the time" [or "opportunity"]. See note on Eph. v. 16.

6. *With grace*: lit. "in grace," i.e. agreeable, gracious.—*Seasoned with salt*: i.e. not weakly sentimental, but sharp and to the point (comp. note on Mark ix. 50).

iv. 7—9.

7, 8 = Eph. vi. 21, 22.—[*That he might know your estate*: Some of the best MSS. read, "that ye might know our estate" (i.e. how we fare).]

9. Onesimus is the run-away slave on whose account the Epistle to Philemon was written (see Introd. to that Epistle).

iv. 10—18.

10. *My fellowprisoner*: Some of his friends shared the apostle's imprisonment in order that they might always be at hand. They took turns at this service, and hence in the Epistle to Philemon we find Epaphras spoken of as "fellowprisoner" (Philem. 23).—*Marcus*: see Vol. I. p. 45.—*Sister's son* should be "cousin."—*Commandments* should be "orders" or "a commission." Probably he was to make a collection, or something of that kind, in Asia Minor.

11. The majority of the Jewish teachers who were residing at the place of the apostle's imprisonment were hostile to him (see notes on Phil. i. 15—18).—[*These only* probably means only these among the Jews.]

12. *Labouring fervently*: "wrestling."

13. *A great zeal* should be "much labour."—*Hierapolis*: Going westwards from Colossæ, Laodicea lay to the left of the Lycus, and Hierapolis to the right. The circumstances of the three neighbouring cities must have been pretty much the same.

14. *Luke*: see Vol. I. p. 48.

15. *Church*: "community."

16. *The Epistle from Laodicea*: i.e. the Epistle which is to be sent to you from Laodicea. As it is not called an Epistle to Laodicea, this may mean the circular described on p. 2.

17. Archippus must have been one of the presidents of the community (comp. Philem. 2).



## THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

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THE First Epistle to the Thessalonians is pretty generally admitted to be the oldest written document of Christianity, and a genuine production of the Pauline spirit. Apart from the most recent attacks (see note on i. 3), the objections to the theory of its Pauline authorship are principally of three kinds :

(1) The vagueness of its contents, which, except in one passage (iv. 13—18), neither present us with any prominent doctrine, nor have any clear practical aim.

(2) Its dependence upon the Epistles to the Corinthians and the Book of Acts.

(3) The reflection, so to speak, in the Epistle, of the community to which it is addressed. Many passages would lead us to imagine that it was addressed to a community which had been founded for some time, whereas, if written by Paul, it must have been written only a few months after he was in Thessalonica.

1. In answer to the first of these objections, it may be urged, however, that although the doctrinal contents of the Epistle display neither the strict sequence nor the wealth of thought, least of all the carefully-weighed completeness, of the comprehensive Christian system which is found in the four great Epistles of Paul, yet the Epistle is not in the least wanting in a very definite occasion and purpose. These are found in the *external* and *internal* troubles which endangered the Christian life of the young community at Thessalonica. The external troubles were the attacks of the Jews of the city upon the gospel of the redemption, and upon the personal sincerity of him who had

brought it to them. To these attacks—perverse manifestations of synagogic zeal, which followed upon the track of the apostle, persecuting him in his labours even as far as Beræa (Acts xvii. 13)—the apostle could only reply in writing (i. 4—ii. 16); for in spite of his very warm desire to renew his personal relations with the young community, the accomplishment of this wish was for a time denied him, and he was compelled to content himself with sending his assistant Timothy, and hearing the vivid accounts which he brought back.

The *inner* occasion of the Epistle is still more plain. Paul's confident proclamation of the impending return of Christ, though it had had a deeply moving effect upon the hearts of those who had listened to his preaching in Thessalonica, had fallen somewhat strangely upon their ears. This was not a favourable soil for such preaching. Thessalonica was identical with the ancient Halia or Thermæ, described in legend as the proud daughter of a fugitive Trojan colony. In the time of Cassander, husband of Thessalonike and son-in-law to Philip of Macedonia, it had been made into an important commercial city by his removal of neighbouring town colonies to this city of his wife. After the battle of Pydna (B.C. 168), it became a Roman city, the most important and active in the province, and the capital of the second "region" or district. Inhabited by a motley population of Jews, Greeks and Romans, and exposed to all the dissipation of comparatively extensive intercourse with foreigners, the city was given up to the frivolities of the public games and iniquities of licentiousness, so that Lucian (in the second century A.D.) still speaks of it as an asylum for every kind of moral filthiness. During the civil war between Pompey and Cæsar, it was the seat of the Roman senate and the party of Pompey; and during the civil war that succeeded this, it was the stronghold of Octavian in Macedonia. It was frequently the residence of Roman exiles of rank and position, as, for example, at one time, of Cicero. From all these causes it was affected, not only by the powerful influences of a world-wide commerce and imperial political inte-



rests, but also by the more subtle influences of a decaying Roman culture and philosophy. This certainly was no favourable arena for a man of Paul's humble position and appearance to contend in with his proclamation of the approaching dominion of a crucified Jew.

Paul's preaching, however, had overcome these obstacles. The exemplary cheerfulness of his character, undestroyed by the grievous experiences of Philippi (ii. 2), his firm and confident faith in himself and his European mission, and the sacred power of his preaching which resulted from this (i. 5), had secured for him and for his words natural admiration and consequently a favourable reception even amidst the worldly, idolatrous and superficial bustle and excitement of the city (i. 9). The touching tenderness of his care for the little community he had succeeded in founding (ii. 7), the value of which was increased to them by the unselfishness of his labours (ii. 9)—an unselfishness rare enough in the busy city of buyers and sellers—had bound firmly to the apostle the hearts that he had taken by storm.

But while the fiery arrows of an unshaken religious conviction had aroused in some the burning glow of Christian expectation, and smoothed for others, who were slower of belief, the ways of Christian faith and joy, the involuntary brevity of his stay did not leave him sufficient time to reconcile the enthusiasm of the former with the regular duties of earthly life, nor to bring the growing faith of the latter in eternal things to a successful maturity. No long time elapsed, after he was compelled to leave them, before the disadvantages began to appear which naturally accompany incomplete and hasty arrangements. And not only was this the case in regard to the external arrangements of the community, especially the relation of its members to the elders, but also their Christian faith and love and hope betrayed the want of apostolic guidance. Here, a moral laxity in the midst of all the "prophetic" religious excitement, justifying itself by its expectation of the immediate approach of the end of the world (iv. 12)—there, Macedonian coldness, which, without the awaken-

ing for which only the apostle's personal presence was sufficient, is unable even to understand the powerful influence of the Christian spirit and "despises prophecy" (v. 20)—and finally, in addition to all this, doubts arising as to the truth of that which had formed the very centre of Paul's preaching to the Thessalonians, doubts in regard to the impending advent of Jesus Christ and his glorification in the community, which was to be brought to him in the joy of its victory. Since Paul's departure they have stood by open graves. Heaven has remained silent. Will it open ere death call away those that still remain? Is there no sign when the Lord shall appear?

Truly, here were questions and matter enough to move the apostle to write from Athens (A.D. 53 or 54) to the community which so sorely needed his fatherly care both with regard to its outward and its inward affairs, that he might bring the enthusiastic to soberness, the sober to the communion of the Holy Spirit, the fearful to hope, the uncertain to clearness of vision, and all—and in this aim all the other aims of the Epistle are comprehended in a higher unity—all to blameless readiness for the day of the coming of our Lord (iii. 13), when the apostle expects to bring his community unto Jesus Christ as "his joy and the crown of his glorying" (ii. 19).

2. The second objection that has been raised against the Pauline authorship of this Epistle is, that the historical framework is in agreement with the *Book of Acts*. This ceases to cause any surprise as soon as we call to mind the composition of that book and its purpose, as described in the introduction to it (Vol. I. pp. 257 sqq.). If the undoubted divergences of the Book of Acts from the trustworthy statements of the Pauline Epistles are invariably to be explained by the endeavours after conciliation which were necessitated solely by the disputes between the Gentile-Christian and the Jewish-Christian parties, and which had these disputes alone in view, then as a matter of course the two accounts will agree wherever these disputes do not exist, as, for example, in Thessalonica, where the opponents of the apostle



were *Jews* and not Jewish Christians (see note on ii. 14—16). The resemblance, again, both in ideas and language, between certain passages in this Epistle and corresponding passages in the other Epistles of Paul (comp. 1 Thess. i. 5 with 1 Cor. ii. 4; 1 Thess. i. 6 with 1 Cor. xi. 1; 1 Thess. i. 8 with Rom. i. 8; 1 Thess. ii. 4 sqq. with 1 Cor. ii. 4, iv. 3 sq., ix. 15 sq., 2 Cor. ii. 17, v. 11), are not more considerable or more striking than the parallels which are found in the four confessedly genuine Epistles of Paul. Especially are many points of contact with the Epistles to the Corinthians explained by the similar position and constitution of the communities at Thessalonica and at Corinth, which, in spite of the difference in regard to the apostle's opponents in the two places, present themselves at once to our view.

3. The third of the objections which we have already named is based mainly upon three passages, and will be dealt with in the commentary on the Epistle (see notes on ii. 18, iii. 10, iv. 9 sq.).

4. There is a fourth objection that has been urged against the authenticity of this Epistle, based upon the unique description of the return of Christ (iv. 14 sqq.), which Paul never repeats elsewhere. This, however, has, from the first, been urged with very little confidence. It is perfectly natural that, as time passed on and the Pauline expectation of the coming of Christ remained ever unfulfilled, this expectation should become more and more free from any material delineation of the end of the world and the beginning of the new world. It is natural that such a change should have taken place between the dates of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians and the Epistle to the Romans; and it is precisely in furnishing us with this powerful material description of the coming of Jesus Christ that the First Epistle to the Thessalonians proves itself to be an *early* primitive Christian document, forming by this very characteristic a connecting link between the full, fresh, primitive Christian life, and primitive Christian literature with its growing inclination to the formation of Christian

conceptions in the place of the various existing or expected realities. And, moreover, we can find no *contradictions* between the description of the completion of Christ's kingdom in this Epistle and the descriptions in the Epistles to the Romans and the Corinthians (comp. Rom. xi. 15, 26, 30, 31 (see Vol. I. p. 161), and 1 Cor. xv. 12—28, with 1 Thess. iv. 14 sqq.). And, what is most important, there is one thing at least even here which is genuinely Pauline, viz. the connection between the call to free life in the fellowship of the fiery and unquenchable Spirit of God, and the exhortations to sober work, both of the outer and the inner man. "The children of day must stand upon the watch-tower like warriors with clear and undimmed eyes; and only thus introduced and surrounded by powerful appeals to the bold and warlike spirit of his Macedonians, does he give the answer to the questions concerning the last things, questions which we may well understand had caused so many tears, so many dreams."

The line of thought pursued in the Epistle is indicated in detail in the notes. Of the two chief sections, the first (i. 4—ii. 16) is *defensive*, directed against the apostle's opponents; the second (iv. 1—v. 22) is *edifying*, didactic and hortatory, and is addressed to the community which the apostle has founded, which is to await, with religious fervour and moral discipline, as a truly receptive community, the return of Christ.

Between these two sections, confirming the first and preparing the way for the second, is a third part, which is *personal* (ii. 17—iii. 13). He speaks of the fellowship of the heart which unites the apostle with the community, and of the *compensation* for his disappointment in regard to that renewal of their personal intercourse which he so warmly desires, but which is impossible to him; viz. *the sending of Timothy*.



## THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

### i. 1. OPENING SALUTATION.

*Paul*: The writer does not add here his apostolic title, as he does in his later writings (Gal. i. 1; 1 Cor. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 1; Rom. i. 1). Emphasis laid upon this rank could have no force as against Jewish, but only against Jewish-Christian opponents.—*Silvanus and Timotheus*: personally known to the readers as Paul's fellow-labourers and companions (Acts xvii. 10, 15). [Here and throughout it is better to put the name Timotheus in the familiar English form "Timothy," as in 2 Cor. i. 1.]—*Unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father, &c.*: It is in Him and the Lord Jesus Christ that the community has its life. They are the power that brought the community together and keep it together.—*From God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*: These words are not found in the best MSS.

### i. 2, 3.

Assurance of a spiritual communion not broken by local separation, a common spiritual life carried on with a feeling of gratitude in the sight of God.

3. The ground of the thanksgiving to God.—*Your work of faith*: the ardent, sacred work (see ver. 6) of turning to the gospel.—*Labour of love*: such loving care as had been already called forth by the persecutions of the Jewish opponents (Acts xvii. 10, 14, 15).—*Patience of hope*: "Perseverance in hope," a special matter of thankfulness, considering the many hardships tending to destroy all hope (ver. 6).—With the triad of Faith, Love, Hope, comp. 1 Thess. v. 8; 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

The fact that the words "work," "labour," "perseverance" (patience), are found in Rev. ii. 2, does not show that the writer of the Epistle copied these current terms from the Revelation. Though the same words are used, the historical reference in the two cases is so different and indeed contrary, that it appears a

very artificial interpretation to explain this verse as a later attempt to combine the Jewish-Christian expression of Rev. ii. 2 with the words of Paul in 1 Cor. xiii. 13 in the interests of the subsequent reconciliation of Jewish and Pauline Christianity.

#### i. 4—ii. 16. FIRST PART.

##### i. 4—ii. 13. *Refutation of attacks made upon the apostle's work.*

The slanderous suspicions cast upon the apostle's work (ii. 3) are met by the direction of the attention of the readers (1) to the *power* of his first preaching and its fruitful influence upon the minds of the Thessalonian Christians (i. 4—10); (2) to the great *confidence* of his preaching, the secret of its fruitful effect (ii. 1, 2); (3) to the testimony of the *Holy Spirit* as the main-spring of his preaching (ii. 3—12). The whole section is an elaboration of ver. 5.

##### i. 4—10. *The power.*

The historical proof of the *power* of his preaching rests, on the one hand, on the powerful impression made by the gospel of Christ upon the susceptible nature of the Thessalonians (vv. 4, 5), and, on the other hand, upon the fruits of their own testimony and missionary zeal, which, in spite of all obstacles, this preaching had produced among them (vv. 6—10).

4. Read, "Knowing, brethren beloved by God, your election," i.e. Being firmly convinced of your election.

6. *Followers* should be "imitators." [*Having received, &c.*: i.e. ye were like us in receiving, &c. De Wette.]

7. *Ensamples*: "an ensample."

8. *Sounded out* should be "hath sounded out," i.e. hath resounded as in an oft-repeated echo.

[9. *Shew of us*: lit. "report concerning us."]

[10. *Which delivered, &c.*: lit. "who delivereth us from the wrath which is coming.]

##### ii. 1, 2. *The confidence.*

But all that has now been mentioned was the fruit of the unwavering confidence and joy which filled and supported the first preaching of Paul himself among them in the face of all that he had to contend with.

[1. *Was not in vain* should be "hath not been in vain."]

2. *But even after that* should be "but although."—*We had*



*suffered before*: see Acts xvi. 22—24.—*Bold*: The apostle believed in his work and his mission. And this boldness had good ground, as explained in vv. 3—12.—*With much contention*: “with much conflict.”

ii. 3—12. *The Holy Spirit.*

The ground of the apostle's boldness. His preaching to the Thessalonians had been *in the Holy Spirit*.

ii. 3, 4.

The motive power of his preaching was the commission from God, not the apostle's egotism, still less any desire to obtain popularity among men.

Read, “For our exhortation (sprang) not from sinful error, nor of an unclean disposition, nor (did it exercise itself) in deceitful thoughts; but as we have been found of God worthy to be entrusted with the gospel, so,” &c.

An incidental indication of the character of his opponents is here to be found (ver. 3) in their own accusations against the apostle. They brought against him the three-fold reproach of sinful departure from the worship of his fathers, of insincere purposes in this faithlessness, and, above all, of crafty self-seeking.

ii. 5—8.

But *God himself* knows the motives from which His servant's preaching arose, and bears witness to Paul in his *conscience*, that the spirit of his proclamation of the gospel to the Thessalonians was not a spirit of flattery nor of covetousness (ver. 5), not a spirit of ambition (vv. 6, 7), but a spirit of the tenderest love conceivable, a love that was willing to impart its best power, and even to sacrifice life itself.

5. Read, “For we never went about with flattering words [lit. were in a flattering word], as you know, nor under an excuse for covetousness.”

6. *When we might have been burdensome* should be “although we might have appeared with great authority.”—*The apostles of Christ*: “Christ's apostles.”

7. *Nurse* should be “foster-mother.”

8. *Souls*: “lives.”—*Were dear*: “became dear.”

ii. 9—12.

The community at Thessalonica itself also bears witness

that the spirit which the apostle manifested among them was a spirit of unselfishness, holiness, righteousness, and blamelessness, a spirit of exhortation, of consolation, and fatherly admonition, working with one aim only; namely, to make the community he had founded "worthy of God."

9. *For labouring*: omit "for."—*Because we would not be chargeable*: "that we might not be burdensome."

10. *Among you that believe* should be "toward you as toward believers."

[11. *How we exhorted*, &c.: lit. "exhorting and comforting (or, according to De Wette, "encouraging") and conjuring you."]

[12. *Who hath called you*: lit. "calling you;" i.e. either "who was calling you," referring to the time about which he is writing, or possibly more generally "who calleth you."]

#### ii. 13.

This verse sums up at once the whole section (i. 2—ii. 12) which states the grounds of gratitude to God in relation to the community at Thessalonica, and then carries us on to the description of the enemies against which the community itself must guard itself with special care, in order that it may remain worthy of God's call to His kingdom and His glory (ver. 12.)—*Received the word of God which ye heard of us*: "received from us the word of the divine preaching."—*As it is in truth the word of God*: as a word from the mouth of God, as in truth it is God himself who speaks to you through me. The peculiarity of the reception which Paul's preaching met with was the immediate belief and self-surrendering enthusiasm. Towards the word of men the hearers assume an attitude of trial, doubt and judgment. (See further, Vol. I. p. 27.)

#### ii. 14—16. *The opponents.*

The apostle's opponents were Jews, who, while their faithless fellow-countryman was still in Thessalonica, had already made him feel all the vigorous hatred of the innovations of Christianity which the Israelitish national religion cherished, and who now transferred this hatred to his fellow-believers in the city.—*Followers* should be "imitators." [They became like the churches in Judea in suffering persecution. Comp. i. 6.]—*Countrymen*: the word means simply fellow-inhabitants of Thessalonica, members of the same state, without any distinction between those of



Jewish and those of Gentile descent; but the Jewish nationality of the opponents is distinctly indicated. Their contest with Paul and his community has nothing to do with the internal divisions of Christianity, but rather is directed against Christianity as such, especially against its proclamation of salvation to all nations, and its overthrow of the Jewish privileges of salvation. The picture which the apostle gives of them, like the speech of the dying Stephen (Acts vii.), contains at the same time the refutation of their attacks. With stern rebuke he points out to them, that it is the very perfection of the national Jewish religion that Christ has brought, and that their contention against him is but rage against their own flesh.

16. *For the wrath is come upon them* (comp. i. 10; Luke xxi. 23). Already in the signs of the approaching political end of the Jews, the apostle foresees their destruction.—*To the uttermost*: i.e. to its full extent, so that the divine wrath can discharge itself fully and completely against the rebellious people without restraint.

ii. 17—iii. 13. PERSONAL SECTION OF THE EPISTLE *between the first and second parts.*

With such opponents to contend against, when Satan had twice frustrated the apostle's wish and resolve to visit the Thessalonians in person, it was desirable to obtain information concerning the state of the community by means of a trustworthy messenger. He gives thanks for the good behaviour of the community.

ii. 17—20.

The apostle's longing for personal intercourse with the community that he had founded.

18. [*We would have come*: better, "we wished to come."]  
—There is no valid reason why the fact of Paul's twice resolving to return to Thessalonica should be supposed to involve a longer intermediate period than the months which intervened between his departure thence and the composition of this Epistle.

19. [*Rejoicing*: strictly, "boasting."—*Even ye*: Some translate, "ye also," i.e. are not ye also, as well as others, our hope and joy? &c.—*Our Lord Jesus Christ*: the best MSS. omit the word "Christ."]

## iii. 1—5.

The substitute for Paul's personal visit, which was impossible; viz. the sending of Timothy.

1. *Wherefore, &c.*, should be "Wherefore we have not borne it any longer, and have resolved to remain at Athens alone."—*At Athens alone*: in such grievous circumstances, in a fruitful nursery of heathen culture and mis-culture, with nothing but his simple preaching to set against all the seductive brilliancy of antiquity, and *alone*. Stress is laid upon the sacrifice which he made in sending away for a time his tried helper, while engaged in a work for the kingdom of Christ, so peculiarly difficult, and requiring every possible assistance.

[2. *Minister of God and our fellowlabourer in the gospel, &c.*: One of the oldest MSS. has "Fellowlabourer of God in the gospel," &c.; some have "minister of God in the gospel," &c. The reading of the A. V. probably dates from the eighth or ninth century.]

2, 3. *And to comfort you, &c.*, should be, "And to exhort you for the sake of your faith, that no man be beguiled in these afflictions," i.e. that no one should weakly yield to such oppression (ii. 3, 14—16).

[4. *That we should suffer tribulation*: better, "that we should have to be afflicted" (the verb being of the same root as the word translated "afflictions" in ver. 3).]

5. [*Forbear* should be "bear it;" see note on ver. 1.]—*Lest, &c.*, should be "Whether perhaps the tempter had tempted you, and our labour might be made vain."

## iii. 6—13.

The accounts which Timothy brings, favourable on the whole, move the apostle to give joyful thanks to God, but only increase his longing to visit them again in person, that they might strengthen and purify one another for a vigorous Christian preparation for the second coming of Christ. So long as the apostle's way does not bring him visibly into their midst, may the invisible power of holy love prepare their hearts for the day of the Lord.

6. *Charity*: "love."

7. Read, "Therefore, brethren, we were comforted on your



account, concerning all our necessity and affliction, through your faith."

10. *Perfect that which is lacking in your faith* (lit. "the deficiencies of your faith"): i.e. complete that which is still wanting to your faith. These words indicate plainly a community *recently founded*, the Christian training of which is still incomplete.

11. "But may He, God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you." [On the phrase *God himself and our Father*, see note on Gal. i. 4.—The best MSS. read "our Lord Jesus," omitting "Christ."]

[13. *God even our Father*: see note on Gal. i. 4.—*Christ* omitted in the best MSS., as in ii. 19, iii. 11.—*Saints*: strictly, "holy ones," understood by some commentators to mean angels.—Some of the oldest MSS. have "Amen" at the end of the verse.]

#### iv. 1—v. 22. SECOND PART.

Separate exhortations to the establishment of a genuine Christian church for the reception of the Lord at his second coming.

#### iv. 1, 2.

Read, "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you, in the Lord Jesus, as ye have received from us the right manner of conduct and well-pleasing unto God [lit. "how ye ought to walk and to please God," after which some ancient MSS. add, "as indeed ye do walk"], that so ye abound more and more."—*Abound more and more*: "increase," viz. in thus conducting yourselves so as to please God.

#### iv. 3—8.

Admonition against *unchastity* and *covetousness*, the two vices which were regarded as the chief vices of heathenism. In Rom. i. 29 they are mentioned together as the guilt of the Gentiles, as also Eph. iv. 17, 19; Col. iii. 5; comp. 2 Pet. ii. 14.

3. *This*: i.e. sanctification, first in the relations of the sexes (3—5), and secondly in the business relations of every-day life (6). In both these it is right to keep oneself pure and holy by a high regard for honour and the property of one's brethren (7, 8).

4, 5. Read, "That every one of you may know how to win his wife in sanctification and honour, not in passion of sensual desire, as the Gentiles which know not God."—The Christian

must not be guided, in his choice of a wife, by blind sensual passion, but rather, as becomes a man striving after salvation, he must seek her in honour, i.e. with reverence for the woman, who is to be regarded, not in heathen fashion as an object of lust, but as a child of God who in Christ is by birth the equal of man.—There is no sign here of the apostle's ascetic renunciation of marriage altogether, which we find later in the Epistles to the Corinthians.

6. *That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter:* i.e. "that no man disregard his brother, or injure him in business."—[*All such:* i.e. "all such things."]

7. [*Hath not called us:* strictly, did not call us.]—*Unto holiness* should be "in sanctification" [the same word as in ver. 3].

[8. Read, "who giveth his Holy Spirit unto you."]

#### iv. 9—12.

The genuine Christian contrast to the vices of the Gentiles, viz. *brotherly love*.

9, 10. *Increase more and more:* viz. in brotherly love. [The word here rendered "increase" is the same that the apostle uses in iii. 12, iv. 1, and is there rendered "abound."] The exhortation itself is preceded by the express recognition of the proofs which the Thessalonians have already given of their Christian brotherly love, that thus the hearts of the readers may be the more inclined to observe the exhortation which follows. On other occasions also Paul introduces solemn exhortations in a similar manner (comp. v. i.; 2 Cor. ix. 1).—The Greek word in ver. 9, which is rendered "taught of God," does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. It refers to the divine teaching which they have borne within themselves since their heart received the gospel, the "word of God" (ii. 13).—The time between the departure of the apostle and the writing of this letter was certainly sufficient for them to win praise for Christian brotherly love within the still very narrow circle of the Christians of Macedonia (vv. 9, 10). At the same time it was likewise sufficient to render an exhortation to a peaceful, quiet and active conduct of life advisable. Moreover, the praise is limited by the wish which the apostle adds, that the brotherly love which they have manifested towards their fellow-christians of Macedonia may *increase*. And the necessity of such an exhortation as that of



vv. 11, 12, is fully explained by the fact that the apostle had not been able to complete in peace even the *foundation*, materially and spiritually, of the life of the Christian community at Thessalonica, but had been compelled unwillingly to withdraw from a work that was in every respect unfinished.

#### iv. 13—v. 11.

Exhortation to a believing confidence and active watchfulness in regard to the second coming of Christ.

#### iv. 13—18.

The first part of this exhortation to a right doctrine is intended to arouse hope and comfort in regard to the last things. The predominant sentiment of the true Christian is the very opposite of sorrow, which is the secret but prevailing sentiment of heathenism, and has its foundation in the despair of the heathen with regard to an eternal blessed life. Perhaps by those who are without hope the apostle understands also his own special opponents in Thessalonica, the Jews, who were likewise unable to draw from their sacred documents a full and joyous faith in the eternal existence of the soul.

#### iv. 13—15. *The hope for those that are fallen asleep.*

[13. *Others*: strictly, "the rest."—14. *Which sleep in Jesus*: strictly, "which have fallen asleep through Jesus," or, perhaps, with a different punctuation, "them also that are fallen asleep will God through Jesus bring with him." Some of the best MSS. have "which fall asleep" (or perhaps "are sleeping").—15. *By the word of the Lord*: strictly, "by word of the Lord."—*Prevent*: here used in the old sense of "outstrip," "go before."]

13. *Concerning them which are asleep*: strictly, "have fallen asleep," viz. in Christ. Here the apostle deals only with those Christians belonging to the community at Thessalonica who have already fallen asleep, or are still falling asleep before the day of the Lord. In vv. 14—16, on the other hand ("the dead in Christ"), he refers to the whole company of the brethren who have died before the second coming of Christ.—In the very expression "*asleep*," the belief in the awakening is assumed. This beautiful metaphor has its Christian source in the view of

Jesus himself, of which we have good evidence. Matt. ix. 24; Mark v. 39; Luke viii. 52; John xi. 11.

14, 15. The firm foundation of our belief in the eternal future of the believing soul is laid in two facts, on which the salvation of Christians generally, and of humanity, hangs, viz. the death and resurrection of Jesus, and in the indestructible communion of the believers with their Saviour, which, as an article of faith, is here expressed from the warmth of the apostle's heart, and in his later Epistles, especially the Epistle to the Romans, is established and more fully developed in regard to its consequences in the interests of apostolic doctrine. Of the resurrection of Jesus, Paul has obtained a most vivid perception through the abundance of the personal revelations of the Master in the course of his conversion and his further preparation for the office of apostle to the Gentiles. Whatever the apostle has experienced in the visions of Christ which have been granted to him, he is absolutely certain of as the fullest spiritual truth. It is to him a *word of the Lord* (ver. 15); for we can scarcely understand by this expression a saying uttered by Jesus when on earth, and handed down by oral tradition. How could the Evangelists in their detailed accounts of the future of the kingdom of Christ (Matt. xxiv. xxv.; Mark xiii.; Luke xvii. xxi.) have passed over any such sayings of Jesus as these? For what is said in v. 2, we find a parallel in the words of Jesus in Luke xii. 39, but that is all.

#### iv. 16, 17. *The day of the Lord.*

Comp. the description in 1 Cor. xv. 23 sqq., 51 sqq., and also Rom. xi. 15, 26, 30 sqq.

16. *With a shout, &c.*, should be "with a given signal, at the voice of an archangel and at the sound of the trumpet of God."

#### v. 1—11.

The impossibility of ascertaining the exact time of the return of Jesus (comp. not only Luke xii. 39, but also Rev. xvi. 15), renders doubly necessary the intense watchfulness which has already found an inner foundation in the unbroken intercourse of the Christian with his Master (ver. 11).

2. *Perfectly* should be "exactly."

[3. *For*: Some good MSS. have "but;" others omit.]

[4. *That that day, &c.*: i.e. "that the day (not "*that day*"),



like a thief, should take you by surprise." Lachmann, with two of the oldest MSS., reads, "That the day should take you, like thieves, by surprise."]

[5. The best MSS. have, "For ye are," &c., connecting this verse immediately with the preceding.]

[6. *Others*: strictly, "the rest."]

[8. *Putting on*: "having put on."]

9. *Hath not appointed us to*: i.e. "hath not intended us for."

11. *Comfort yourselves together*: "exhort one another."

#### v. 12—15.

Exhortation to an orderly Christian social life.

13. *Among yourselves*: "with them" [some of the best MSS. have one reading, and some the other].—14. *Warn them that are unruly* should be "admonish the disorderly."—[15. *Among yourselves*: strictly, "to one another."]

#### v. 16—22.

This Christian social life (vv. 12—15) must be founded upon a truly Christian inner life. The signs of this are: rejoicing both in unceasing prayer and in thanksgiving (16—18); a burning yet clearly-felt inspiration through the intercourse of the soul with Christ in faith, while awaiting his speedy return from heaven (19, 20); and at the same time the careful testing of the religious judgment within, and of the moral conduct without (21, 22).

[16. *Evermore*: "always."]

17. *Pray without ceasing*: No extravagant form of speech but the absolutely sincere wish of the apostle. What he means is the unceasing, uniform direction of the heart to God in Christ even in the midst of all the external distractions of that work-day labour which he will not put aside in favour of idleness, but on the contrary requires of others and recommends by his own example.

[20. *Prophesying*: see notes on Rom. xii. 6; 1 Cor. xiv.]

#### v. 23—28. CONCLUSION.

#### v. 23, 24.

Benediction exactly as in iii. 13, but with an indication of the ground of the hope of God's blessing.

[23. *And I pray God*, &c.: strictly, "and may," &c.—*Unto the coming*: strictly, "in the coming."]

## v. 25—27.

The confirmation of the hearty fellowship between the apostle and the community. On their side he begs for their intercessions with God; and on his side he sends them with his holy greeting a visible written sign of his intercessions and care for them; and expresses an earnest desire, that every member of the community may be made aware of it.

[27. *Charge*: strictly, “adjure.”—*Holy*: omitted in most of the old MSS.]

v. 28. *Parting salutation.*

[*Amen*: see note on iii. 13.]

*Subscription.*

[The subscription is found in one of the oldest MSS. as it stands here, but the others have simply “To the Thessalonians,” or “1 to the Thessalonians is completed, 2 to the Thessalonians begins.”]



## THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

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THE Second Epistle to the Thessalonians in its present form can scarcely be by the writer of the First Epistle. What is most characteristic of each of the two Epistles is its own peculiar doctrine of the "Day of the Lord," and it is in this very matter that they contradict one another. The First Epistle teaches most emphatically that that day will come as a thief in the night, suddenly, at a time that cannot be calculated, taking all by surprise. The Second Epistle, on the other hand, gives a very careful and comparatively circumstantial account of the sure signs by which its appearance may be known (ii. 3—12). And these tokens of the approaching return of Christ, the Paul of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians is supposed to have described orally when he was present with them and first founded the community! (ii. 5). If they had been thus instructed, how can we explain the vacillating uncertainty of the Thessalonians, and how was it possible for Paul to give them afterwards the kind of instruction which we find in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, at the beginning of the fifth chapter? (vv. 1, 2). The very opposite of that which the Paul of 2 Thess. is supposed to have told his readers, is in the First Epistle assumed as the Pauline doctrine concerning the last things, viz. the *absence* of all certain signs of the return of the Lord.

If, therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that the apostle Paul was the writer of our "First" Epistle to the Thessalonians, then at the outset the non-Pauline origin of the Second Epistle would

be very probable. In addition to this, there are, however, two other reasons for doubting that it was written by Paul.

(1.) The *thanksgiving* (i. 3—10) contains ideas of the righteousness of God and its relation to the sufferings of the Christians, to which we may vainly seek to find any parallel among the well-authenticated ideas of the apostle. That the Christians will one day be rewarded (i. 6) for the furtherance of the kingdom of God, to which they contribute by their sufferings (i. 5), is (in spite of 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18) scarcely a genuine thought of the man who elsewhere recognizes only one ground of salvation—viz. God's free grace—the man who gave to his doctrine of the redemption its peculiar point by vigorously rejecting each and every human merit in the sight of God (Rom. iii. 24, ix. 12 sq., xi. 6, &c.), and so laid the foundation for the conception on the part of his disciple which appears in connection with the words of the Lord in Luke xvii. 10. Here, on the other hand, we have rather the echo of Matthew (Matt. v. 12) and his idea, which approaches more nearly to that of the Jewish righteousness by works. Again, that the reward which God will give to His own on the day of the revelation of Christ, should be spoken of as the "calling" (i. 11) of which God will one day count them worthy, is difficult to understand from the Pauline point of view. In Paul's view, the calling, so far as it is regarded not as the original counsel of the divine grace before the beginning of time, but as an event in the life of the individual, is always the *beginning* of the Christian life, the calling into the community of Christ and those who believe in him (Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 2, 26, vii. 15; 1 Thess. ii. 12; comp. Eph. iv. 1, 4; Col. iii. 15), and not the *goal* to be pursued.

(2.) Quite decisive, however, is the completely un-Pauline character of the whole system of conceptions and ideas which pervades the chief division of the Epistle (ii. 1—12). The idea of the "*man of sin*," who must first be completely revealed before the day of the Lord can come, is as alien to the whole Pauline literature as the picture of that which "*withholdeth*" (ii. 6, 7),



which is represented now as a thing, and now as a person that hinders the end of this world, and must be removed before the kingdom of God can attain its realization. At the same time, these two ideas are marked by such clearness and originality, that if the apostle Paul had ever taught them, and, further than that, actually committed them to writing, he must necessarily have recurred to them in treating of the same subject afterwards, either for the sake of explaining or correcting them. A simple silence concerning such earlier apostolic teachings would have been quite impossible in such passages as 1 Cor. xv. 23 sq.; Rom. xi. 15, 26, 31, 32 (see Vol. II. pp. 160 sq., 235 sq.). This very section, however (ii. 1—13), shows that our Epistle has a very definite connection with another and a very un-Pauline book, viz. the *Revelation of John*. In both alike (see Introd. to Rev.) we find the waiting for the speedy, if not immediately impending, appearance of the Lord (Rev. i. 3, the time is *at hand*; Rev. xxii. 20, I come *quickly*; comp. 2 Thess. i. 7, ii. 2); in both alike we find the expectation of grievous times *before* the return of Christ, when hostility to Christ (the “falling away,” 2 Thess. ii. 3) will gather up all its strength; Satan, in a visible bodily form (Rev. xii. 3 sq.), will venture upon a last attempt to deify himself and seduce the world and subject it to himself (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4; Rev. xiii. 14, xvi. 13); but the Lord will victoriously smite to the ground the whole power of sin gathered up in this human incarnation of Satan, and establish a new kingdom of glory for them that are his (2 Thess. ii. 8—11; Rev. xvii. 8, 11).

The intimate connection with the Revelation prevents us also from putting the origin of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians at a much later date—in the time of Trajan—as some have thought we should do. This would be more than a generation later, at a time when just the above-mentioned most characteristic ideas of the Revelation had undergone a complete transformation in the ordinary Christian mind—when especially the idea of a comprehension of evil in a *single* individual *person* who was to come (the Antichrist) had disappeared, and its place had been

taken by the idea of *many* deceivers and Antichrists, or the *spirit* of Antichrist that was already present (1 Tim. iv. 2; 2 Pet. ii. 1; 1 John ii. 18, iv. 3; 2 John 7).

But no doubt a *change* in the figures of the Apocalypse had already occurred. The *name* of Antichrist no longer appears, and, what is most important, a *new figure* has appeared upon the scene, he who (or that which) "withholdeth;" and also, as it seems, a new circumstance, which is a sign of a new period that has been reached, viz. "the mystery of ungodliness" is already actually being realized (ii. 7).

If, then, the Revelation was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, the points of resemblance between it and 2 Thess. ii. 1—12 will lead us to fix the date of the Epistle *near* the great catastrophe of the year 70 A.D., while the additions which are here made to the apocalyptic picture and the corrections of it indicate some period *after* that year. The idea of the "adversary" is as clear and powerful as ever, but he no longer bears his classical name of Antichrist. For the very name which had hitherto been associated with that of Antichrist in the ideas of Christendom had convicted the expectation of Christendom of falsity. Nero did not re-appear. The mystery of ungodliness, though not fully revealed, is already fully realized and active (ii. 7). Jerusalem is destroyed, and Christendom, this "temple of God" (see note on ii. 4), is threatened with the desecration of its holy of holies by the abomination of the man of sin who lusts after divine honours (ii. 4). Nevertheless, there is still something that withholds this fulfilment, viz. the Roman empire; and one who embraces this withholding power in himself, viz. the Roman emperor, has now by his victory over Jerusalem established and confirmed once more (and in the belief of the writer for the last time) his infamous sway over the people of the Lord.

Thus the chief passage of the Epistle to the Thessalonians, literally and historically explained, secures for it an important place in New-Testament contemporary history. It would thus appear as a letter of consolation addressed to the whole of Chris-



tendom in one of its most serious crises, a call to confidence in times of such bitter disappointment as Christian hearts had never experienced since the death of the Master, a warning to be sober amid all lofty expectations (ii. 2), to be steadfast in Christian conviction and apostolic doctrine (ii. 15), to be strictly moral in word and deed (ii. 17), and to maintain a well-ordered life in the community (iii. 6—15), and all this at a period which was the reverse of favourable to these particular virtues, and rendered these very exhortations so desirable. Notwithstanding all that has been said, it is undeniable that the Epistle now before us contains scattered traces of the genuine Pauline spirit and style. The very idea of the divine "calling," which is employed in so un-Pauline a manner (i. 11)—with which we may also compare the corresponding un-Pauline use of the expression "kingdom of God" (i. 5) as of something yet to come—appears again in its true Pauline form (ii. 13, 14). And indeed the whole of the section where it thus appears (ii. 13—17), apart perhaps from the "holding by the traditions" (ver. 15), contains nothing inconsistent with the Pauline spirit. This is still more decidedly the case with the exhortations in the last chapter (iii. 1—15), and especially the prayer for deliverance from the "perverse and wicked men" (iii. 2) may be explained from the apostle's aversion to the same enemies whom he has spoken of in the First Epistle (1 Thess. ii. 14—16).

Moreover, it is historically by no means improbable that some consequences which may have followed from the First Epistle to the Thessalonians may have induced the apostle to write a Second Epistle, his careful and devoted heart longing to exert as deep a personal influence as possible upon his second European community. In that case, we should have to regard the relation between the two Epistles as similar to that between the two Epistles to the Corinthians, which also deal to some extent with the same subjects and originated in somewhat similar circumstances. It is possible, then, that our Second Epistle to the Thessalonians is only the later form of a Pauline Epistle which has been lost to

us in its first form (see Vol. I. pp. 16 sq.), and so the answer to the question of its authenticity is essentially the same as in the case of the Epistle to the Colossians.

The Epistle may be divided into four sections as follows :

- (1.) Thanksgiving and intercession, i. 3—12.
- (2.) Concerning the signs of the return of Christ, ii. 1—12.
- (3.) Exhortations to the whole community, ii. 13—iii. 5.
- (4.) Exhortation against the disturbing operations of individual members of the community, iii. 6—15.

The interpretation of this Epistle depends essentially upon the view taken of its historical position and application, and has practically been already given, to a very great extent, along with our exposition of these.



## THE

# SECOND EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

### i. 1, 2. *Address and salutation.*

These verses, even to the addition of the final words of ver. 2, are a simple transcription of the opening salutation of the First Epistle. [It would seem that these last words, "from God our Father," &c., belong properly to this Epistle, and have been inserted in the other from it, as they are found here in all the MSS. See note on 1 Thess. i. 1.]

### i. 3—12.

*Renewed thanksgiving and intercession for the spread of the power of faith and the increasing sanctification of the community.*

### i. 3—10. *The thanksgiving.*

It is remarkable here that we find no mention whatever of any personal relation between the apostle and the community, nor any definite allusion to the history of the recent past, both of which are found in the thanksgiving of the First Epistle, and give it such life and power.

5, 6, 7. *The righteous judgment of God*: The judgment of God as operative, inasmuch as it here distinguishes the spirits in preparation for the day of the last judgment. Already this divine righteousness has placed the Thessalonians who suffer for the kingdom of God in the category of those for whom the decree of God's grace has appointed eternal *rest*, or refreshing; properly, the "remission" or "cessation" of all sufferings in the kingdom of God which is to come.—*That ye may be counted worthy*: properly, "which (judgment of God) has determined to count you worthy (at some future time) of being received into the kingdom of God."—*Of the kingdom of God*: i.e. the future kingdom of God, which begins with the return of Christ.—"If (not "seeing") it is a righteous thing with God," i.e. "provided we are right in our

Christian faith that the justice of God duly recompenses eternal tribulation unto them that trouble you, but to you," &c.

8. *Them that, &c.*, should be "them that know not God (i.e. the Gentiles, see 1 Thess. iv. 5; Gal. iv. 8), and them that obey not," &c. (i.e. the Jews, see Rom. x. 3). The idea of the eternal punishment of the *Gentiles* is in accordance on the whole with the ideas of the apostle on the subject, as expressed elsewhere (Rom. ii. 5 sq.; comp. 2 Cor. v. 10; also Eph. vi. 8, and Col. iii. 5, 6), and only in the Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xv. 27, 28) does a more comprehensive and magnanimous view lead to a (somewhat doubtful) mitigation. On the other hand it must be acknowledged that the Epistle to the Romans (xi. 25, 26) relieves the prospect, so excessively painful to the apostle himself, of the eternal perdition of a portion of his *Jewish* countrymen, which is also admitted here, by an expression of the hope of a final salvation of all Israel. Hence not only the ground of the salvation of the Christians (ver. 5), but also the prospect set before those who are not Christians (vv. 6—10), throw suspicion upon the Pauline origin of this passage. [On the question of Paul's views regarding the ultimate salvation of the whole human race, see notes on Rom. xi. 12, 25, 26; 1 Cor. xv. 23—28.]

9. *Presence*: "face" [so lit.].

10. *In his saints*: i.e. in those who believe in him. In the future salvation of his own, Christ himself will be contemplated with praise and wonder as the cause of this salvation.—*Our testimony*: comp. ii. 5.

#### 11, 12. *The intercession.*

11. *Wherefore*: It is in view of the impending decision that the intercession is especially required.—*Would count you, &c.*, should be, "Would count you worthy of the calling, and in his power perfect (in you) all willingness for goodness, and every work of faith."

12. *And ye in him*: Not only has Christ visible manifestations of his own glory in the glory of those who are his, but also conversely those who are his revere in him the source of light, the mere reflection of which in themselves compels praise and admiration. This has already been alluded to in ver. 10, and is here more fully developed.



ii. 1—12. *The certain premonitory signs of the return of Christ.*

1. *By the coming* should be “in regard to the second coming,” and the second *by* should be omitted.

2. Read, “That ye be not soon shaken from your self-possession nor terrified, neither by prophetic utterances of the spirit [lit. “neither by spirit,” as in A.V.], nor by word or letter as proceeding from us, as if the day of the Lord were immediately at hand.”—“Prophetic utterances of the spirit:” Discourses of those who were excited by the spirit in the meetings of the community. The writer does not deny the right of this prophetic utterance here, any more than in 1 Thess. v. 20. But, as proceeding from fallible men, it is not to be regarded in itself as necessarily a divine revelation, but it must be tried (1 Thess. v. 21); and so trustworthy tests are here supplied to the community at Thessalonica, in order that its members may not, amid the excitement of prophecy, lose their sobriety and self-possession.—“Nor by word or letter as proceeding from us.” The community must not be shaken from its self-possession by erroneous and ignorant appeals to Paul’s words, or his First Epistle and its apostolic authority (“as from us”). That the fulfilment was *immediately* at hand, Paul neither announced to them when he was with them nor in his First Epistle.—This verse bears special evidence of the existence of genuine fragments of a Second Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians in the Epistle now before us.

3, 4. Read, “Let no man deceive you in any way; for (he cometh not) except the falling away first come, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, the adversary who exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he setteth himself in the temple of God, and desires to show that he is a god.”—The falling away and the revelation of the man of sin are premonitory signs of the second coming of Christ.—*The temple of God*: Christendom (comp. 1 Cor. iii. 16 sq.; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Heb. iii. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 5, iv. 17; 1 Tim. iii. 15).—This passage affords some ground for assigning a different date to the Epistle, and placing it, with the Revelation of John, shortly *before* the conquest of Jerusalem, which took place in the year 70 A.D. The “temple of God” must then be understood literally of the temple on Mount Moriah.

5—12. Read, “(5) Remember ye not that when I was yet

with you I told you these things? (6) And now ye know that which withholdeth (him) that he may not be revealed until his time. (7) And already the mystery of ungodliness is engaged in realizing itself only until he that withholdeth (it) is out of the way. (8) And then shall the ungodly one be revealed whom the Lord shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and shall do away with him by the manifestation of his coming: (9) him, whose appearance (will be brought about) in accordance with Satan's way of working, in every kind of lying power and signs and wonders, (10) and in every deception of unrighteousness among those that are perishing because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. (11) And for this cause God will send [or according to the best MSS. "is sending"] to them the power of deception, so that they shall believe the lie; (12) so that all might be judged who believed not the truth, but took pleasure in a lie."

In this more detailed development of the two ideas of the "apostasy" (i.e. "falling away") and the "man of sin," the writer first completes the second of the two by his description of the "withholding" power and the "withholding" person (see Introd.) which must be removed out of the way (vv. 6, 7) before the ungodly one can complete, to his own destruction, his full revelation of himself (ver. 8). After this (vv. 9—11) the first figure, namely that of the apostasy, is further described in detail. This is the final picture of *humanity* before the judgment-seat. It corresponds to the final picture from the *demoniacal* world in which the evil one appears before the judgment-seat. What is especially characteristic of this last condition of humanity is, that in one portion of it, by means of the Satanic powers of deception possessed by the fully revealed man of sin, the *conscious* suppression of the sense of truth within (ver. 10) takes active shape as a rejection of the truth given in Christ, and now appearing complete and glorious in him (ver. 11). So plainly will it appear in these last days, that there is for humanity no other perfect truth at all (ver. 10) than that which has been revealed in Christ (ver. 11), that a rejection of this truth is equivalent to complete surrender to the lie—a surrender provoked by Satanic deception—and so is equivalent to eternal perdition.



ii. 13—iii. 5. *Exhortations addressed to the community as a whole.*

13. *Through*: in.—15. *Word or our epistle*: “our word or epistle” [lit. “word or epistle of ours”].—iii. 2. Read, “And that we may be delivered from the perverse and wicked men, for not all men have faithfulness.”—[3. *Evil*: or “the evil one,” the Greek is ambiguous.]—5. *The patient waiting for Christ*: not, as some take it, “the patience of Christ.”

The ground of this exhortation is the joyful fact of their divine calling to salvation (vv. 13, 14). Its aim is the increase of their fidelity to the apostolic doctrine that has been imparted to them (ver. 15), moral excellence and firmness in word and deed (vv. 16, 17), zeal for the diffusion of the word of the Lord and the overthrow of the apostle’s opponents with their malicious attacks upon his teachings (iii. 1—4), and finally a united expectation of the return of Christ, a hope which is full of divine love (iii. 5).

iii. 6—15. *Exhortations against certain individuals who disturb the moral excellence of the life of the community.*

6. *Tradition*: From vv. 7 sqq. it is plain that it is not any peculiar doctrinal ideas that are meant here, but moral precepts. We may compare with the whole of this passage (vv. 6—16), Matt. xviii. 16, 17.

8. *Chargeable*: “burdensome.”

11. *Are busybodies* should be “busy themselves with worthless matters.”

14. *Be ashamed*: lit. “turn to himself,” i.e. reflect upon his conduct and repent of it.

iii. 16—18. *Conclusion.*

16. *By all means*: “in every way.”

17. *The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, &c.*: The deliberate purpose which is evident in this express assurance casts suspicion upon its genuineness. Comp. the far better authenticated and much simpler postscript in Gal. vi. 11. And, moreover, how are we to reconcile this “token” with the fact that it is not found in the undoubtedly genuine Epistles of Paul?

18=1 Thess. v. 28.

## THE PASTORAL EPISTLES.

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THE Epistles which have been preserved in our New-Testament collection of writings under the name of the Epistles of Paul to Timothy and to Titus, are usually spoken of together as the *Pastoral Epistles*, because their contents consist mainly of precepts for pastoral activity, i.e. for the guidance of the life of the Christian community.

The tradition of their Pauline origin may be traced back as far as the second century A.D., but may nevertheless be proved by adequate historical evidence to be erroneous. Not only do we find no trustworthy mention of these Epistles before the last third of the second century, but also in earlier literature there is no reference at all to their contents, not even where reference to them would have been very natural, nay, almost inevitable.

That these three Epistles are not authentic, and that they date from a period *no earlier than the second century*, appears—apart from the un-Pauline language which is common to them all—(1) from the impossibility of finding any places for them in the apostle's life as known to us; (2) from their (almost identical) doctrinal and ecclesiastical tendencies; (3) from the nature of the ecclesiastical circumstances assumed in them, especially as regards (4) the heretical teachers.

(1.) Not one of the three Epistles can be assigned to its place in the *historical life of the apostle Paul* as known to us.

The *First Epistle to Timothy* purports to have been written when Paul had travelled from Ephesus into Macedonia and left Timothy behind at Ephesus (1 Tim. i. 3). This could only refer



to the journey which is mentioned in Acts xx. 1. But at that time Timothy was so far from having been left behind in Ephesus, that he had actually gone on before the apostle (Acts xix. 22), and he met him again in Macedonia in order to make the return journey in his company (Acts xx. 4). Moreover, Paul did not intend to return to Ephesus from Macedonia, and yet this is what he has in view in 1 Tim. iii. 14, iv. 13. It is a strange thing altogether that the apostle, who was with Timothy for months together, both before and after this time, should, during a temporary absence, have sent such instructions in writing, as if they were intended for a prolonged exercise of office. Such an unnatural state of things can only be explained as invented by a later writer to enable him to clothe his own pastoral precepts in the form of an Epistle from the hand of the celebrated apostle.

The *Epistle to Titus* assumes the following position of affairs : The apostle Paul is supposed to have been labouring in Crete, then on his departure to have left Titus as his representative, and while on his journey to have sent him this Epistle with its instruction in the duties of his office. In it he further requires him to come to him quickly at Nicopolis, where he (Paul) intends to winter (Tit. i. 5, iii. 12). Now the Book of Acts mentions no stay of Paul's on the island of Crete except the short stay during his voyage as a prisoner to Rome. Of course this cannot be what is referred to here. Nor does the Book of Acts represent Paul on any occasion as spending the winter in Nicopolis. Nor, again, can we find room to insert this scene in Crete and Nicopolis anywhere in the narrative of the missionary journeys of Paul in the Book of Acts. We cannot insert it *before* the period of his residence in Ephesus (Acts xix.), for it was there that he made the acquaintance of Apollos who is mentioned in the Epistle (Tit. iii. 13). Nor can we insert it *after* that period ; for after Acts xx. 1, the events that follow are so closely connected with one another that such an interval is incredible. Finally, we cannot insert it *during* the residence in Ephesus, for

an interruption of his stay there, which must have lasted more than six months, must surely have been worth mentioning. In addition to this, the following difficulties should be considered. In the community so recently founded there are already "heretics," schismatics (iii. 10), who must therefore have sprung up under Paul's very eyes when he founded the community. Concerning these, Paul, who is absent, gives information to Titus, who is present, and who must have known the state of affairs better himself. He gives him by letter detailed instruction in the duties of his office, whereas he might have inculcated all that, and much more, orally. Finally, while giving him instructions for a long term of office, he writes to him at the very same time that he is to come to him at Nicopolis as soon as possible, before he has had any time to carry out his instructions. All these inexplicable difficulties show us that the whole position of affairs is unhistorical and is an invention of the writer.

Finally, the *Second Epistle to Timothy* purports to have been written from Rome, from the imprisonment there (i. 8, 17). It is involved, however, in contradictions with the Epistle to the Philippians, written from the same imprisonment. In the Epistle to the Philippians we find that Timothy is with Paul, and Paul does not intend to send him to Philippi until he knows something definite as to the course of his trial (Phil. ii. 19, 23). Here we find Timothy is not only away from Paul, but he has never been with him since his imprisonment. He has to be informed not only in regard to the trial, but also in regard to other Roman affairs, and even occurrences which evidently preceded Paul's arrest (iv. 20); all which is entirely inconsistent with the historical facts of which we have the surest evidence. In addition to all this, the Epistle is involved in self-contradiction. According to iv. 6 sq., Paul's cause is hopeless. According to iv. 17 sq., the worst danger is passed. According to iv. 9, 21, the person to whom the Epistle is addressed is to come to Paul as soon as possible, and at any rate before the winter; and yet the Epistle itself contains instructions for a long period of office,



and exhortations to endure faithfully amid all difficulties and sufferings, and to execute fully the office of pastor (iv. 2, 5, &c.). Finally, it is most remarkable that the apostle, writing from Rome, should mention trifling occurrences (as in iv. 13, 20) which took place before his arrest in Jerusalem, that is to say, at least three years previously to the date of the Epistle. All this leaves not a doubt as to the unhistorical nature of the whole position of affairs represented in this Epistle. (On the two sections, iv. 9 sqq. and i. 15 sqq., we shall have some further remarks to make hereafter [see p. 85].)

(2.) *The ecclesiastical doctrine* of the Pastoral Epistles is very widely different from the ancient Pauline doctrine. Of the peculiar Pauline doctrines concerning the Law and the Gospel, works and faith, we find here only colourless fragments, which have an appearance of fixed traditional formulæ, while the actual conscious faith has changed. The statements of 1 Tim. i. 8 sq. in regard to the Law occupy only a general moral ground, and have nothing in common with Paul's doctrine of the Law and his fundamental opposition to the legal point of view. The *universality* of the divine grace is connected in these Epistles, not with the abolition of the Law through Christ (as in Paul's writings), but with the unity of God (ii. 5). Not only does the writer, from first to last, attach much greater weight than Paul does to *good works* (Tit. iii. 8, 14, ii. 14, 7; 2 Tim. iii. 14; 1 Tim. v. 10), but they even have a meritorious value (at least in the First Epistle to Timothy, see ii. 15, iii. 13, iv. 8, vi. 19), form steps to heaven (1 Tim. iii. 13), and gather a store of merits for the future (1 Tim. vi. 19), all of which is very little in harmony with the fundamental Pauline idea of justification by faith alone without any human ground for boasting.—*Faith*, indeed, is frequently spoken of, but the word is already applied in its ecclesiastical sense of agreement with the right doctrine handed down by the church; nay, to some extent, indeed, it is identified with the doctrine itself, so that faith is equivalent to doctrinal belief, which is never the case in Paul's writings (see 1 Tim. i. 4, ii. 7,

iii. 9, iv. 1, 6, vi. 10). Great importance is attached to *right doctrine*, to the confession of it and the maintenance of it as it has been received, without departing from it, without falsifying it, without entering into unsound disputes which destroy the peace of the church. "Soundness" of religious life here consists in the acceptance of "sound," i.e. orthodox, doctrine. Christianity itself is even called simply "the doctrine" (1 Tim. vi. 1). The common consciousness of the church has already become so strong as to form a law, a rule of faith, an obligatory standard for the faith of individuals (see 1 Tim. i. 5, vi. 14; for the "sound doctrine," see 1 Tim. i. 10, vi. 3, 2 Tim. i. 13, and many other passages; for the preservation of that which has been received, and continuance in it, 1 Tim. iv. 6, 16, vi. 3, 14, 20, 2 Tim. i. 13, &c.) In complete correspondence with this, the *church*, as the bearer of this sound doctrine, is called the foundation and pillar of the truth (1 Tim. iii. 15). As the true universal church, it is distinctly separated from the heretics (Tit. iii. 10; 1 Tim. i. 20), as apostates, castaways, diabolical deceivers (1 Tim. iv. 1 and frequently).

(3.) *The condition of the church* which is assumed in these three Epistles, points unmistakably to the second century. In its opposition to the heretics mentioned above and its contests with them, the church has consolidated itself. The ecclesiastical constitution is now so far developed that in 1 Tim. we find the office of bishop clearly distinguished from that of elder (the bishop appears from 1 Tim. v. 19 even to have had the power of passing sentence upon the elders), whereas not only in the apostolic age, but even at the beginning of the second century, "elder" and "bishop" were synonymous terms. The elders, however, have formed themselves into a "presbytery" (1 Tim. iv. 14). By this presbytery the bishop is ordained with laying on of hands and dedicatory prayer (ib.), and by this ecclesiastical act of dedication he receives the gift of his office. How foreign is all this to the Christian community of the Pauline age, where doctrine, ministry and the guidance of the community were all determined, not by



ecclesiastical appointment and consecration, but by the gift of the Holy Spirit according as it was given to each (comp. 1 Cor. xii.).—Again, the *discipline of the church* is already very definitely developed. Heretics, after being twice or thrice warned, are cast out (Tit. iii. 10; 1 Tim. i. 20). [Comp. Matt. xviii. 15—20.] Those who have lapsed are received again, after a period of repentance and reformation, with laying on of hands by the bishop (1 Tim. v. 22, 24 sq.). The public worship of the church takes the regular form of reading the Scriptures and exposition of them by the bishop or one of the elders (iv. 13, v. 17). And, moreover, the “*Scripture*” includes not only the Old Testament, but also the Gospels, one of which (Luke x. 7) is quoted as “*Scripture*” (1 Tim. v. 18). *Liturgical formulæ* have already taken shape, one such formula being undoubtedly found in 1 Tim. iii. 16.—Finally, we find a very peculiar institution here, which nowhere presents itself earlier than the second century (1 Tim. v. 9 sqq.), viz. the *widows* in the church, a spiritual order of aged women to whom is assigned a position of honour in the community on account of the services they have done to the church, and who are provided for by the community. It is a condition of this order (as in the case of those who are, properly speaking, officials of the church) only to have been married once, a second marriage being regarded as a moral blot which excludes them from this honour; and in this we see a stepping-stone to the later sacerdotal vow of celibacy and a monastic life.

(4.) *The false teachers* with whom the writer of the Pastoral Epistles has to contend are all characterized alike by the following traits. They boast of a higher knowledge of God (Tit. i. 16), but it consists in mythical ideas of the procession of spirits from God (“genealogies” and “myths” [A.V. *fables*], Tit. iii. 9; 1 Tim. i. 4), ideas which were associated with the Law (the Old Testament), and were probably clothed in the form of a figurative interpretation of it (“teachers of the Law,” “fightings about the Law,” 1 Tim. i. 7; Tit. iii. 9, i. 14). With this imagery were united ascetic principles, the prohibition of certain kinds of food,

and of marriage (1 Tim. iv. 3, 8; Tit. i. 14 sqq.), a tendency which has its precedent in the Essenic scruples of the false teachers at Colossæ and the "weak brethren" in Rome, but which goes beyond them, inasmuch as asceticism here rests definitely upon a system in which matter, as such, is regarded as unclean and defiling. Hence our Epistles point out that everything created by God is, as such, good and clean, and nothing in and by itself is evil or defiling, as the false teachers supposed that which is material to be. With this view of theirs was further connected the rejection of the bodily resurrection, resurrection being taken by them to mean that spiritual resurrection of the higher knowledge which had already taken place (2 Tim. ii. 18). Finally, the stress which is laid upon the humanity of Christ and his appearance in the flesh (1 Tim. ii. 5, iii. 16) seems to indicate that there was on the other side a denial of the humanity of Christ. Still this cannot yet have become very prominent, otherwise it would doubtless have been more distinctly and emphatically disputed (as in the later polemical literature of the church, e.g. the Ignatian Epistles).—If we now proceed to inquire with what historical phenomenon all these characteristics agree, there can be no doubt that it is the *Gnostics of the second century* who are here assailed. And this is expressly confirmed by the phrase in 1 Tim. vi. 20, "the gnosis falsely so called." But among the different Gnostic systems which agitated the church during half a century, we are not here concerned with the latest and most fully developed (the Valentinians and Marcion), for these either rejected the Law entirely or used it only for polemical purposes, and so could not be called "teachers of the Law;" and, moreover, they carried the doctrine that the humanity of Christ was only apparent (docetism) much further than we can suppose it to have been carried by the false teachers mentioned in our Epistles. Accordingly, we must look for the false teachers in these Epistles among the *earlier Gnostics*, Cerinthus, the Ophites, Saturninus and the earlier Basilidians, who flourished *in the first three decades of the second century*.



We have thus been able to fix the period, generally, to which our three Epistles belong. But within this period, the *order of their succession* may further be ascertained with tolerable probability from minor details and shades of difference.

The *First Epistle to Timothy* is undoubtedly the *latest* of the three Epistles. It presupposes the most advanced development both in ecclesiastical affairs (especially the constitution of the church) and in the errors assailed. Next stands the *Epistle to Titus*, where the distinction between bishops and elders is not so fixed (see notes on i. 5, 7), the false teachers are more gently judged and more hopefully spoken of (see i. 13 and note on iii. 9), and as yet no fear of docetism calls for special care in regard to the deification of Christ (see note on Tit. ii. 13). Finally, the *Second Epistle to Timothy* is decidedly the *oldest* of the three. Here the false teachers are not particularly described (except in regard to the isolated characteristic in ii. 18). The principle of the church in relation to them is still—in marked contrast to the two other Epistles, especially 1 Tim.—gentleness and toleration (ii. 24 sqq.). There is as yet no ecclesiastical episcopacy, and the personal exhortations addressed to the recipient of the letter (the representative of the presiding authorities of the community) are in part so far from flattering, that they would be very little suited to the later ideas of the exalted episcopal rank. In regard to this latter point, the case is the same with the Epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp, which altogether displays striking points of contact with 2 Tim.

This order of the three Epistles has also external historical confirmation. In the First Epistle to Timothy, not only is there no mention of the sufferings and persecutions of the Christians, but the Christian community even expects protection and safety from the kings and rulers (1 Tim. ii. 2). This agrees with the reign of *Hadrian*, whose friendly disposition and moderation towards the Christians are expressly mentioned by Eusebius (Ecc. Hist. iv. 8 sq.). On the other hand, the Second Epistle to Timothy is full of lamentations over the sufferings which the

Christians cannot escape (2 Tim. iii. 12), and its main purpose is to exhort its readers to fidelity and endurance under these persecutions (i. 7 sq., ii. 1—13). This must have been in the reign of Trajan, who first organized a general official persecution of the Christians in Asia.

Another peculiarity of the Second Epistle to Timothy must be mentioned, which likewise makes it appear to be the oldest, and the others to have been based upon it. In the latter, there is little that is personal; and even this betrays itself as the invention of the writer's imagination (see above). In 2 Tim., however, there are at least two sections which have recently been taken—and probably not erroneously—to be fragments of genuine Pauline Epistles. These passages are 2 Tim. i. 15—18, and iv. 9—21. The first of these two is shown, by its peculiar disconnected position between i. 14 and ii. 1, to be an independent fragment which has been enclosed here. In that case, there is no reason why it should not have been written by the apostle to some friend during his imprisonment in Rome. The second section makes a special impression of genuineness by its many personal notices. That it did not, however, originally belong to the Epistle, and so proves nothing with regard to the authenticity of the whole, follows from the contradiction already noticed between iv. 6 sqq. and iv. 17 sq. On the contrary, it is probable that this section, iv. 9—21, is from the beginning of Paul's imprisonment in Cæsarea. This explains vv. 13 and 20, which refer to the journey which the apostle had recently made from Corinth, via Troas, to Jerusalem (Acts xx. xxi.). In that case the "first defence" [A.V. "answer"] (ver. 16) is the defence before Felix in Cæsarea (Acts xxiv.); and the "deliverance out of the mouth of the lion" (ver. 17) is the deliverance from the plot to murder him, and from the unlawful jurisdiction of the bloodthirsty Jews (xxiii., xxiv. 22); and the "completion of the proclamation" (ver. 17) refers to the possibility newly opened to him of continuing and completing his missionary activity. Of course the leaving of Trophimus behind in Miletus (ver. 20) does not agree



with the Book of Acts (see Acts xxi. 29), but it is possible that the narrative of the latter is not very accurate here.

Since, then, the writer of the Second Epistle to Timothy incorporated in his composition fragments of two genuine Pauline Epistles which had somehow or other come into his possession, it was the more natural that he should wish it to be respected and accepted as Pauline. His *purpose*, however, in writing the Epistle was partly practical—to exhort the Christians to fidelity and firmness under the sufferings of the persecution (under Trajan) (i., ii. 1—13, iii. 10—12), and partly polemic—to warn against the seductions of the false teachers who at that time were beginning to take a more decided ground (ii. 14—iii. 9, iii. 13—iv. 5).

As the threatening danger from these latter continued to increase, and a firmer coalition of the orthodox communities and a regular ecclesiastical organization became a more and more pressing necessity, the example of the first Pastoral Epistle was followed (either by the same or by another writer), first in the Epistle to Titus, and afterwards in the First Epistle to Timothy. As, however, the Epistle to Timothy which had already appeared was a farewell Epistle (iv. 6 sqq.), the second one had to be placed at an earlier period in the apostle's life, and hence it obtained the name of the *First* Epistle to Timothy. The contents of these two Pastoral Epistles consist partly of attacks upon false doctrines, partly of precepts for the arrangement of the affairs of the Christian communities, partly of ethical precepts for various ranks and degrees of Christians. Doctrinal discussions are only occasional, and are introduced here and there for the confutation of irregular doctrine or to confirm moral exhortations. There is no trace in either Epistle of any systematic division and arrangement of these materials (see Commentary).

## THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

### i. 1, 2. *Introduction.*

1. *By the commandment* (or "commission") *of God our Saviour* (deliverer): This appellation of God is not to be found in the Pauline Epistles, but it occurs repeatedly in the Pastoral Epistles. They may have had an interest in emphasizing the statement that God himself is the proper (original) author of salvation, in opposition to the false Gnostic doctrine which taught that between the creative God and the Redeemer there was a dualistic opposition, or supposed that there were intermediate semi-divine beings (æons) who were the authors of the redemption.—"Christ, our hope:" Either inasmuch as our hope rests on him, and he is the pledge of our hope and also of our final deliverance (comp. Rom. viii. 34 sqq.); or inasmuch as he is the object of our hope, the one for whom we hope—hope, namely, that by his appearance for the establishment of the kingdom of his glory (vi. 14) he will also bring those who believe in him to blessed perfection. The latter is the more probable explanation. The Pastoral Epistles so far occupy an entirely Pauline position, in still regarding salvation as pre-eminently a future thing, a subject of hope. This is not so in John.

2. [*Own son*: properly "lawful son."]—*Grace, mercy, peace*: This formula, in expression of the writer's good wishes, is peculiar to the Pastoral Epistles. Paul always wishes simply, Grace and peace. The former, then, represents the cause of Christian salvation in God, and the latter the effect of reconciliation in the human mind. Mercy, as the motive power of grace, is included in it, and its separate mention is therefore pleonastic. This might be explained by the same interest as the phrase, "God our Saviour" (ver. 1), viz. by the contest with the false Gnostic doctrine, that the just God (the God of the Old Testament) was not at the same time the merciful and forgiving God of Christianity.



i. 3—11. *Against false teachers.*

3. *As I besought* ("exhorted") *thee*: The apodosis to this is wanting. It would run somewhat as follows: So do I now repeat and confirm, in writing, my commission in regard to those false teachers. [It is supplied somewhat differently in A.V. by the insertion of the words *so do* at the end of ver. 4.]—On the rest of the verse, the proper translation of which is so simple that there can be no doubt about it, and no alteration has been attempted except upon irrelevant and dogmatic grounds, see the remarks on pp. 77 sq.—*That they teach no other doctrine*: The word only occurs here and in vi. 3. [The Greek has one compound word = "To teach another doctrine."] The meaning is the same as in the phrase, "another gospel," 2 Cor. xi. 4; Gal. i. 6, i.e. a false doctrine departing fundamentally from the apostolic doctrine. In the passages we have just referred to in Paul's Epistles, what was meant was the Judaistic conception of Christianity directed against Paul. Here what is meant is the Gnostic doctrine directed against the doctrine of the church, as is shown by ver. 4.

4. *Fables and endless genealogies*: The former denotes the false doctrine in its general character as a mere creation of the brain, the latter its more exact contents. To the question of what is meant by these *endless genealogies*, various answers have been given. (1) Jewish genealogies, the family trees of the Old Testament, either in the literal sense, or with a figurative interpretation applying them to the religious states of the soul. But if it be literally the Old Testament genealogies that are meant, how could they be spoken of as fables, and the harmless study of them as "another" (i.e. false) doctrine? Figurative interpretations of them, relating to the religious states of the soul, are found in Philo, but cannot be proved to have been in vogue among the Essenes; nor do the other characteristics of these false teachers belong to the Essenes (see Introd. pp. 82 sq.). (2) Series of spiritual beings of the invisible world proceeding from the abyss of God; in this case, either the spirits belonging to the Kabbalistic wisdom of God, or those of the Essenic doctrine of angels, or of the Gnostic doctrine of æons. It cannot refer to the Kabbala, however, for it is *Christian* opponents who are here dealt with, not *Jewish*. The Essenes recognized, indeed, different orders of angels, but did not represent them as descended from

one another. This only agrees with the Gnostic doctrine of æons, which were represented as cosmic powers, personified intermediate beings between the super-material God and the material world, proceeding from one another, and therefore essentially connected with one another, and standing in a relation of dependence one upon the other. With this not only the epithet *fables*, but also *endless*, agrees excellently, inasmuch as these æons represented personified ideas, the series of which could be spun out indefinitely, and concerning which all sorts of fabulous statements might be made. This expression for the Gnostic series of semi-divine beings is found, moreover, in Irenæus and Tertullian.—*Which minister*, &c., should be, “Which offer controversy rather than divine salvation as it has been given in the faith.” The unshaken validity of the ecclesiastical doctrine, which has God’s true ordinance of salvation as its contents, is opposed to the tottering nature of the false doctrine, the controversies of which only concern fables.

5. By *the commandment* we must here understand, not the moral law, but the ecclesiastical rule of faith (as in vi. 14); what is meant is that which is to serve as a standard for the belief of the individual. This proves itself to be a genuine faith by its moral effect (the *end*), viz. “love out of a pure heart, and out of a good conscience, and out of unfeigned faith.” The true love, therefore, presupposes not only a pure disposition generally, but also especially the genuine faith, which must be understood here to mean not simply personal truth of conviction, but also actual external orthodoxy (in opposition to heresy).—This is the ecclesiastical application of the thought expressed in Gal. v. 6!

7. The false teachers are not called *teachers of the Law* as being Judaistic observers of the Law, like those of the Epistle to the Galatians, nor as being fundamentally opposed to it, like the Gnostic Marcion, as it might be, but as Judaizing Gnostics, who put forward their figurative interpretation of the Law as true knowledge of the Law. Such were the earlier Gnostics, such as the Ophites and Saturninus.

8, 9. In opposition to the false exposition of the Law by the false teachers, the true application of it by orthodox Christian teachers proceeds from the perception that the Law is not for the righteous man, who does right of himself, but for sinners



who require external discipline—a general moral proposition, which must not be confused with the peculiar Pauline doctrine of the Law (see Rom. v. 20; Gal. iii. 19—24), though it may remind us of Gal. v. 23.—*Unholy and profane*: Such as esteem nothing holy, and wickedly offend against God himself.

10. *Sound doctrine*: A conception peculiar to these three Epistles = the right doctrine, the doctrine which is in accordance with the ecclesiastical canon. It assumes the development of an ecclesiastical consciousness, a rule of faith (see note on ver. 5).

11. Read, "According to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God," &c.: comp. 2 Cor. iv. 4. The glory of the blessed God is the subject-matter of the gospel, in so far as it proclaims the revelation and beatific communication of the divine perfection, and especially of the divine fulness of love, through Christ.—This verse imitates a formula which repeatedly occurs in the Pauline Epistles, without the same reason for it in the context here, as in Gal. ii. 7; 1 Thess. ii. 4; 1 Cor. ix. 17 sq.

i. 12—17. *Personal.*

12. *Ministry*: "office."

[13. *Injurious*: a feeble rendering of a strong Greek word, which means properly, "wanton," "insolent," "ungovernable," or "licentious." It is also used of animals in the sense of "savage, untameable." In the New Testament it only occurs in one other passage, viz. Rom. i. 30, where Paul is piling up epithets to describe the worst aspects of heathen life, and is there rendered *despiteful*.]

15. *Of whom I am chief*: An exaggerated imitation of 1 Cor. xv. 9 ("the least of the apostles"), which, in the hands of the Pauline author of the Epistle to the Ephesians, had already passed into the unsuitable form, "the least of all the saints" (Eph. iii. 8).

17. *The King eternal*: lit. "the King of the æons," i.e. of the ages, which collectively of course form eternity. What is meant by æons here is not the Gnostic æons, which are fables (ver. 4), although no doubt there is an allusion to them, as though the orthodox conception should be opposed to the false one.—*The only wise God* should be "the only God." The word "wise" is not found in the best MSS., and is probably an inter-

polation from Rom. xvi. 27. The emphasis laid upon the unity of God is directed against the idea of a multitude of divine beings in the false doctrine of the Gnostics.

i. 18—20. *Exhortation to Timothy, and condemnation of false teachers.*

19. *Which some, &c.*: “which some having put away, made shipwreck concerning the faith.”

20. *Hymenæus and Alexander*: These appear in 2 Tim. ii. 17, iv. 14, as prominent heretics, but there they are not yet excommunicated.—*Whom I have delivered unto Satan, &c.*: comp. 1 Cor. v. 5. What is meant is not simply that they have been excluded from the community, but that they have been handed over to the executor of divine penal judgment in the natural world, this being the Hebrew and primitive Christian idea of Satan. That is to say, the passage expresses an imprecation of penal suffering on earth with a view to spiritual correction and deliverance.—[*May learn*: more accurately, “might be taught.” The idea of discipline and punishment, as well as instruction, was associated with the Greek word here used.]

ii. 1, 2. *Prayer for the government and those in authority.*

ii. 3—7. *The universality of the redemption.*

5. The unity of God, the creator of all, is the ground of the universality of salvation (comp. Rom. iii. 30). Conversely, the Gnostics, on the ground of their dualism, limited salvation to a portion of mankind, and established the distinction between sensuous and spiritual men.—*The man Christ Jesus*: comp. Rom. v. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 21. By this epithet it is not intended to deny the higher nature of Christ (see iii. 16), but only expressly to reject the Gnostic error that Christ was only a *seeming* man, and as such only *appeared* to die.

6. *A ransom*: as in Matt. xx. 28.—*To be testified in due time*: lit. “a testimony at the right time.” Christ’s work of salvation here spoken of is the subject of the Christian proclamation of salvation, which is made known to the world at the proper time (comp. Gal. iv. 4, *when the fulness of the time was come*).

7. *Am*: “was.” This express assurance that Paul had been appointed (by God) to be an apostle, and moreover to be an



instructor of the Gentiles in faith and truth (i.e. in the true doctrinal belief), serves to support the authority of the author, who speaks in his name, and to confirm his ecclesiastical doctrines against the heretics.

ii. 8—15. *The position of men and of women in the community.*

15. The function of woman is not to come forward publicly and to teach, but to devote herself to domestic life. By the fulfilment of her duties as a wife and a mother (assuming that she is truly Christian) she will attain her own personal perfection.—The historical motive for this recommendation of marriage (which does not agree with 1 Cor. vii.) is to be found in an opposition to the ascetic rejection of it by the false teachers (see iv. 3).—*In child-bearing*: “through child-bearing.”

iii. 1—14. *Concerning bishops and deacons.*

1, 2. *Bishop*: lit. “overseer.” The word also occurs in Tit. i. 7; Acts xx. 28; Phil. i. 1. These passages leave no doubt that originally the overseers were identical with the elders (presbyters). Both words were names for the same directors of the community. The difference between the names probably consisted simply in this, that the one name (inclining to the Jewish custom) referred to their official rank, the other to their official duty. Soon, however, it became customary for one member of the presidential board to appear as the first among his equals in office. And then, as the guidance of the community was more especially his business, the name of overseer (episcopos, bishop) was especially assigned to him. The appearance of this distinction between the bishop and the presbyters in the Epistle to Titus (Tit. i. 7, comp. ver. 5) should be noticed. In the passage now before us, it is more definitely fixed.—[*This is a true saying*: lit. “Faithful is the saying.” The Greek is the same as in i. 15.]

2. *The husband of one wife*: comp. “the wife of one man,” in v. 9, on the widows of the church. In both cases, the words can only refer to the prohibition of the second marriage of widows or widowers. It was the universal opinion of the church in those ages that a second marriage was a moral blot. It was scarcely allowable even for the laity (Tertullian forbade it to them), and in the case of clerics it was absolutely forbidden. This is still the custom in the Greek Catholic church, while the Roman

church went on to the celibacy of the priesthood.—*Vigilant, sober*: “sober, moderate.”

3. *Striker*: i.e. ruffian, bully.—[*Not greedy of filthy lucre*: better, probably, “not sordidly desirous of gain;” but the best MSS. omit this altogether, and it has probably been introduced from ver. 8.]

4. *Gravity* should be “dignity.”

8. *Deacons*: According to Acts vi. 1—6, these had originally the care of the poor, to which duty, however, were soon added various other services in relation to the external affairs of the community.—[*Grave*: “dignified,” see note on ver. 4, where the Greek word is similar.—*Not greedy, &c.*, see note on ver. 3.]

9. *The mystery of the faith*: the mysterious contents of the doctrine, mysterious because it is only made known through the divine revelation in Christ, and is hidden from the natural world.

[11. *Grave*: “dignified,” or perhaps rather “demure,” the same word as in ver. 8.]

13. *Purchase to themselves a good degree* should be “obtain for themselves a good (lit. “beautiful”) position” (lit. “step”), i.e. of eternal blessedness, as is indicated also by the *boldness in the faith*. The idea is as far from being genuinely Pauline as that of vi. 19, and hence some would take it to mean a higher grade of ecclesiastical office; but the words do not exactly convey that meaning, and moreover this would assume a hierarchy of ecclesiastical grades of office too highly developed for that age.

iii. 15, 16. *The church and its creed as the foundation of truth.*

15. *The pillar and ground* (“foundation”) *of the truth*. This belongs to what has preceded, not to what follows. It describes an attribute of the community. Comp. 1 Cor. iii. 11, where Jesus Christ is the sole foundation, and Eph. ii. 20, where the apostles and prophets (in the church), with Jesus Christ as the corner-stone, form the foundation, while here the church is spoken of outright as the foundation. Thus we see how the genuine Pauline idea was gradually supplanted by the Catholic ecclesiastical idea.—[Some commentators, maintaining that Christ, not the church, is the foundation of the truth, endeavour to obtain the same meaning here by placing a full stop after “the living God,” and



then continuing, "A pillar and ground of the truth, and confessedly great, is the mystery of godliness," &c.]

16. Read, "And confessedly great is the mystery of godliness; who was manifested in the flesh," &c.—*The mystery of godliness*: i.e. the mystery which is the subject of godly consciousness and of ecclesiastical belief. In the words that follow, this is expressed in a form in which we may probably recognize one of the oldest liturgical formulæ of the church.—"Who was manifested," &c. This is the best authenticated reading. "Who" means Christ, the substance and subject of the mystery.—*Justified in the Spirit*: i.e. proved, by the spirit that dwelt in him and proceeded from him, to be the true Christ (comp. Rom. i. 4).

iv. 1—11. *Against false teachers.*

1. *Now the spirit speaketh expressly*: i.e. the prophetic spirit saith plainly. The writer throws the description of the false teachers of his own time into the form of a prophecy revealed to Paul by the spirit.

4. This is in opposition to the Gnostic doctrine, according to which many kinds of matter, and especially all animal flesh, as being produced by generation, belonged to the domain of unclean spirits, and therefore it was defiling to men to partake of them. Comp. the discussion in Rom. xiv.

6. *Whereunto*, &c.: "in which thou hast ever been."

7. *Old wives'* should be "old women's."

8. *Bodily exercise*: ascetic abstinence. To reject this entirely was quite foreign to the Christian sentiments of the age; it is only the one-sided and exaggerated estimation of it at the expense of true devotion to the church that the writer desires to guard against.—*Promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*: either, the promise of the true and completely satisfying life here and hereafter, or else, promise (of all good things) for this earthly existence and for the future existence hereafter.

iv. 12—16. *Personal admonition to Timothy.*

12. *Of the believers*: "to the believers."—[*In spirit*: not found in the best MSS.]

13. *To reading*: The reading of the scripture in congregational worship, which was followed by edifying and instructive exposition ("exhortation" and "teaching").

14. *The gift that is in thee* (i.e. the endowment with office), *which was given thee by prophecy* (i.e. with pious wishes and benedictions), *with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery*. This can only refer to a formal ecclesiastical consecration such as was customary in the church in the second century, but cannot be proved to have existed at an earlier period. The word *presbytery* also indicates a corporate authority, a spiritual rank which does not occur before the second century.

[15. *Profiting*: i.e. "progress."]

v. 1—16. *Pastoral precepts for conduct toward old and young.*  
*The widows of the church.*

3. *Honour*: Most modern commentators, following the example of the early ones, rightly understand this of consideration paid to the widows in regard to the support they received from the church (comp. *worthy of double honour*, in ver. 17). *That are widows indeed*: see notes on vv. 5, 9. Those who are not *widows indeed* are such as are not entirely solitary and helpless, and so do not *require* the assistance of the church (see ver. 4), or such as do not conduct themselves quietly and modestly as widows should, and so are *not worthy* of the assistance of the church (see ver. 6).

4. Read, "But if any widow have children or grandchildren, let these first learn to hold them that belong to them in honour, and to show gratitude to their parents," &c. This translation is required both by the construction of the Greek and by the context. It cannot be the widow who is to learn, but the children and grandchildren, first, because the verb is in the plural, and secondly, because the second requirement only applies to them. The words which we have rendered, "hold them that belong to them in honour" [lit. "reverence their own house"], are sometimes rendered, "rule their houses piously;" but the proper meaning of the verb is "reverence," "treat with piety," which is not the duty of widows to their children, but of children to their parents, the same as the gratitude which follows. It would be strange, too, if, in regard to the assistance given by the church, widows who were quite alone had precedence of those who still had children to provide for. The latter would rather require double assistance. On the other hand, it is perfectly natural that



those who were quite helpless should take precedence of those who had children or grandchildren capable of assisting them (see ver. 16).

5. Read, "But the true widow, she that is left solitary, hath fixed her hope in God," i.e. upon God alone, in her want of human care. This is the reason why the church should take charge of her.

7. *Give in charge*: "command."

9. Read, "As a widow let only such an one be received as is not under threescore years old," &c. What is meant is the admission into the class of widows of the church. These can neither have been deaconesses, nor simply women supported by the church. If the former, why should they have to be so old? If the latter, why should they only have been married once, and not be allowed to marry again, by which the community would be relieved from the burden of providing for them? They must have had a certain rank and position of honour in the church, along with public provision that was made for them. They formed a kind of spiritual order, of which a higher ecclesiastical sanctity was demanded, especially abstinence from second marriage, which was regarded as a blot (see note on iii. 2). Admission to this order seems to have been a kind of reward of the church (an institution for public provision) for such widows as had in their earlier life deserved well of the church (ver. 10). Hence others might also be received into this order who, without really being widows, had claims to such recognition and reward. In that case, though really virgins, they received the title of *widows* at the same time as the honour. This explains vv. 11 and 14.

11. Read, "But the younger women receive not as widows," &c., i.e. young women (no matter whether they be virgins or widows, in the strict sense) must not be received into the ecclesiastical order of "widows," and that on the ground that, whatever their good qualities might be, they have not the moral maturity and firmness which is the indispensable condition of this ecclesiastical honour, and especially because it is to be feared that they may not be willing and able to keep the vow of abstinence from marriage that is required on their admission to the order.

12. Read, "Having their sentence that they have violated

their first faithfulness," i.e. broken the vow to abstain from marriage which they took when they entered the ecclesiastical order of "widows."

14. *The younger women*: The Greek is simply "the younger" in the fem. plur., and might mean either "the younger ones," i.e. the younger widows, or "the younger women." What actually is meant is the younger women generally. Instead of pressing hastily into a spiritual order for which they have not yet the necessary moral maturity, they must look for their natural calling in marriage (comp. ii. 15). This is consistent with all that has preceded. On the other hand, if we suppose that the widows, properly speaking, are meant, an evident contradiction arises at once, inasmuch as second marriage would then be recommended to them, which, however, was made a ground of exclusion from the rank of "widows" of the church (ver. 9).

15. This necessarily supposes that this institution of widows of the church had been in existence for some time, and so points to a period pretty late in the second century.

v. 17—22. *Precepts for church discipline.*

17. *Double honour*: i.e. a double gift of honour.—*Especially they, &c.*: Thus there was a distinction among the elders between those who ruled and those who taught. According to this, the office of teacher was already a regular office in the community, which was by no means the case at the beginning, when teaching belonged to each member as the Spirit gave it to him.

18. The second quotation is from Luke x. 7. That the latest of the first three Gospels is here quoted as "Scripture" is striking evidence of the late date of the Epistle.

19, 20. We may suppose that these directions, nominally addressed to Timothy, were practically intended to apply to the bishop of the community at the time. This pronouncing sentence upon the presbyters shows us a very definite development of the episcopal authority over the presbytery.

21. The selected angels are angels of the highest rank in that hierarchy of angels of graduated ranks which we find frequently alluded to in the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians.

22. This refers either to receiving into the church again those who had fallen away and been cast out for a time, or to the admission of catechumens into the community. By hasty admis-



sion of unrepentant sinners, the ruler of the community would become an accomplice of the sinners.

v. 23. *Admonition as to diet.*

In the form of personal warning as to diet, we have here a contravention of the one-sidedness of Gnostic asceticism, which had especially prohibited flesh (see note on iv. 4) and wine.

v. 24, 25. *Ecclesiastical discipline.*

24. The connection with ver. 22 shows without any doubt that this refers to the moral court of the church, and gives an additional reason for prudence in accepting catechumens or the lapsed. It should further be noted that this development of *regular ecclesiastical discipline to be exercised by the bishop* assumes the ecclesiastical circumstances of the second century.

vi. 1, 2. *Duties of servants.*

1. *His doctrine* should be "The doctrine," i.e. Christianity.

2. *Partakers of the benefit* should be "and undertake to do good." They (that is, the masters) occupy themselves in the exercise of Christian benevolence to all, even their servants. This is an additional reason why Christian servants should serve faithfully.

vi. 3—5. *Against false teachers.*

3. [*Teach otherwise*: see note on i. 3.]—*Wholesome*: i.e. "sound" (see note on i. 10).—*The doctrine which is according to godliness*: i.e. which is in harmony with the common consciousness of the church; in modern language, "good doctrine."

4. *Proud*: "darkened." [Lit. "enveloped in mist or smoke," or metaphorically, "in clouds of conceit," and then "conceited, silly."]

5. *Supposing that gain is godliness*: "supposing that godliness is a means of gain."

vi. 6—10. *Against covetousness.*

vi. 11—14. *Admonition to fidelity in the fight of faith.*

12. *Professed, &c.*, should be "confessed the fair confession," i.e. in baptism, in which the calling had been realized.

[13. *A good confession* should be "the fair confession," as in ver. 12.]

14. *This commandment* should be "the commandment," i.e. the rule of faith, which must be kept pure from all contamination or falsification by false teachers (see notes on i. 5, vi. 20).

vi. 15, 16. *Doxology.*

This doxology, which only occurs here in this form, contains in its statements concerning God in part contradictions of the Gnostic theology, and in part connecting links with it. The Gnostic theology emphasized the super-sensuous nature of God, but offended against the unity of God, by assuming two or more final causes of the universe (see note on i. 17).

vi. 17—19. *Admonition to the rich to be godly and benevolent.*

[18. *To communicate*: i.e. to share their possessions with others.]

19. *A good foundation*: i.e. a foundation for their salvation. This merit of good works (comp. iii. 13) is a decided departure from the genuine Pauline gospel (see note on Rom. iii. 27).

vi. 20, 21. *Against false teachers; conclusion.*

20. *That which is committed to thy trust*: either his office, which he should take care to fulfil faithfully, or else—and from what follows this seems more probable—the true doctrine, the ecclesiastical tradition, the bearers of which (from the second century onwards) were the bishops, who are represented by Timothy throughout the Epistle (see note on v. 19).—*Profane and vain babblings, &c.*, should be "unspiritual and profane chatter, and the wrangling of the falsely so-called gnosis."—In this verse, the main purpose of the whole Epistle, as set forth at the beginning (i. 3), is once more shortly summed up in conclusion, and this time with direct mention of the opponents that have previously been only indirectly indicated: "The falsely so-called gnosis" (knowledge). This shows that the opponents had openly claimed for their doctrine the title of "gnosis," i.e. "higher knowledge," and that they therefore belonged to the well-known historical heresy of the Gnostics. This claim to higher knowledge which is involved in their name the writer rejects, declaring that they have adopted this name *falsely* (i.e. without any right to it), inasmuch as their doctrine is, on the contrary, nothing but "profane chatter," and it is so because it departs from the faith (ver. 21).



## THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

### i. 1, 2. *Introduction.*

1. *According to the promise of life*: The will of God, that has called him to be an apostle, is the same that has promised life in Christ, and for the fulfilment of this promise has established the apostleship.

### i. 3—7. *Remembrance of the early life of Timothy, and his family, in the faith.*

3. *That without ceasing, &c.*, should be “as without ceasing,” &c.: This is a parenthesis explaining how it is that he comes to give thanks for Timothy, but not expressing the subject of the thanksgiving. Whether the subject is given in ver. 5 or omitted altogether may be left undetermined.

5. The un-Pauline origin of the Epistle is plainly betrayed by the fact that the Christian faith of Timothy is treated as the same thing as the Jewish faith of his mother and grandmother, just as the faith of Paul (ver. 3) has been represented as the unbroken continuation of the Jewish faith of his forefathers.

6. The gift of the office is referred to the laying on of hands in the dedication to the office (comp. 1 Tim. iv. 14).

7. *Spirit*: Not simply a state of the human spirit within, but (in accordance with the objective system of ideas, from which the ancients could never escape) a self-existent spiritual being imparted by God, to which belong the attributes of power, love, &c., whence it also produces the corresponding virtues in the spirit of man. This objective system imagines the various spiritual states of man to be separate superhuman spiritual beings.

### i. 8—14. *Admonition to be faithful to the saving gospel.*

8. *Be thou partaker, &c.*, should be “suffer with (me) for the gospel.”

9, 10. The *author* of our salvation is God. The temporal

means by which it is brought about, and the beginning of its realization in the individual, is the holy calling of the individual (i.e. the calling to God's kingdom by means of the gospel, ver. 11). The *ground* of our salvation is found, not in our (meritorious) works, but in God's *own purpose*, more closely defined as His *grace, which was given* (actually applied) *to us in Christ Jesus* (as existing before the world and the representative of the community, which was contained in germ, as it were, in him, comp. Eph. i. 4) *before the world began, but is now* (properly, "has now been") *made manifest* (i.e. has appeared historically, and so been practically made known) *by the appearing of our Saviour* (i.e. deliverer) *Jesus Christ* (the historical Redeemer, whence the order in which the names stood before is here inverted), *who hath abolished death* (in the absolute sense of the word, death temporal and eternal, bodily and spiritual) *and hath brought life and immortality* (complete, satisfying and imperishable existence, the blessed state) *to light* (introduced life and immortality into the historical existence of humanity) *through the gospel* (as the medium of the call to life, which offers to the individual the fruit of the redeeming work).—This is a short summary of the fundamental ideas of the Pauline gospel, approaching, however, to the later Johannine development and application of them (e.g. "hath brought to light").

12. *That which I have committed*: The Greek is one word, meaning a thing committed or entrusted, and is the same that is used in 1 Tim. vi. 20; but here it is evidently employed in a different sense. The context shows that it here means the possession of saving grace given by God, the preservation of which unto the day of judgment he hopes to obtain from the power of God. It is probably used in the same sense in ver. 14, though there it might possibly be the same as in 1 Tim. vi. 20.

#### i. 15—18. *Personal.*

On this section of the Epistle, see Introduction (p. 85).

#### ii. 1—13. *Exhortation to Christian fidelity in suffering.*

1. *Be strong*: properly, "become strong."

2. *Among many witnesses*: i.e. "supported by many witnesses." There is an allusion here to some ceremonial act. It may have been baptism (see 1 Tim. vi. 12), or it may have been consecration to office (2 Tim. i. 6).



3. *Endure hardness*: "suffer." [So the best MSS. read, or, more exactly, "suffer with (me)," as in i. 8, see note on that verse.]

5. From the illustration of warlike contests the writer passes on to the peaceful rivalry of the games, and then (ver. 6) to a third illustration of a hard-working husbandman, all alike to show that only the indefatigable and persevering labourer of Christ may hope for results and reward of his labour, but that such a one is sure of his reward.

6. Read, "The husbandman who exerteth himself shall be the first to partake of the fruits."

8. *According to my gospel*: Reference to the statement of the fundamental principles of the Pauline Christology found in the Epistle to the Romans (Rom. i. 3 sqq.), probably intended at the same time as a warning against heretical dissent in regard to Christology.

9. *Is not bound*: It is being preached freely, and making progress (comp. Phil. i. 12 sqq.).

10. *The elect*: Those who already believe in Christ, or will come to believe in him. The whole body of believers consists, according to the Pauline doctrine of predestination, of the number of those whom God from before the beginning of time has predestined to be saved by means of faith in Christ, and whom He has thus chosen out, or "elected," from the rest of humanity (Rom. viii. 29 sq., ix.; Eph. i. 4, 11; Acts xiii. 48).

11. Here there seems to be a reference to Rom. vi. 5 sqq., but the words are used in a different sense. There it is the mystical fellowship with Christ that is spoken of. Here, by "dying with him," we must understand the death of the body for Christ's (i.e. the gospel's) sake; and by "living with him," the bliss beyond the grave which is the reward of a martyr's death.

13. Read, "If we become unfaithful, he remaineth faithful (to himself), for he cannot deny himself." That in which God remains true to himself (taken in connection with the words, "he will deny us," ver. 12), can only be his penal justice, the fulfilment of his threats against human unfaithfulness. As to the question whether that is a genuine Pauline idea or not, we have only to compare Rom. xi. 29—32.

ii. 14—26. *Exhortation to resistance.*

15. Read, "Be diligent to show thyself to God as proved," &c.

—*Rightly dividing*: The Greek word, which does not occur elsewhere, must either mean to “keep rightly” (not to wander from the right way), or to “handle rightly” (divide, apply, expound, &c., correctly).

16. The false doctrine, which is described in the same way in 1 Tim. vi. 20.—The second clause should be, “For they will proceed further and further into ungodliness.”

18. It was consistent with the system of the Gnostics that they rejected the doctrine of the resurrection in its proper (ecclesiastical) sense, and interpreted it as a spiritual resurrection, consisting in the awakening from the death of error unto the true knowledge.

19. *The foundation* = the community founded by God (see note on 1 Tim. iii. 15).—*Seal*: An inscription, such as is put upon a foundation-stone or other part of a building as a motto. The two sentences of the inscription which the community bears express its consolation and its duty: (1) They that believe are known by God, that is, they are the objects of His love and providence; (2) Every one that nameth the name of Christ (i.e. professes that he belongs to Christ), must depart from all unrighteousness, i.e. must abstain entirely from everything ungodly in faith or in life, as a desecration of the community of God.

20. The actual existence in the community of unworthy members, which is inconsistent with the ideal state of things in ver. 19, is compared with the diversity of household vessels, which are not all noble, i.e. not all made of noble material and intended for noble uses. The comparison is of course defective, in so far as the less honourable vessels are necessary to the house itself, whereas the dishonourable members of the community are an unavoidable evil. Hence this point of view, from which it is intended to justify God in regard to the evil in the world, is exchanged in ver. 21 for the moral point of view, from which the writer declares what should be the conduct of the individual in relation to this mixed company.

21. *Purge himself from these*: viz. from the dishonourable vessels (i.e. members of the community), by breaking off all fellowship in their character and proceedings.

22. *Them that call on the Lord* = those who confess him (comp. Rom. x. 12; Acts ii. 21).



25. *In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves*: It should be noticed how much milder and more tolerant, and moreover more hopeful, this attitude towards the false teachers is than that which we find in the First Epistle to Timothy. From this we may infer that we are here concerned with an earlier stage in the development of the false doctrine.

iii. 1—9. *The characteristics of the false teachers.*

1. See note on 1 Tim. iv. 1. The prophecy betrays itself flagrantly (vv. 5, 9) as a description of the present.

2. *Men* = the great majority, so that we have here a description of a general tendency of the age. This is not the same as "some," in 1 Tim. iv. 1, who have fallen away from the faith of the church, and who form a definite company of heretics. There it is a false doctrine that has already developed into a schism that is attacked; here it is a school within the community itself, and a school that is to be condemned on moral rather than doctrinal grounds.

3. *Despisers of those that are good* should be "unfriendly."

5. *Denying the power thereof*: They do not allow the morally purifying and ennobling power of godliness to be realized and have its proper effect.

6. This agrees with the accounts given of the Gnostics by the Christian Fathers, who tell us that they were especially fond of watching for opportunities of making proselytes among women.—[*Led away*, &c., refers to the women.]

8. *Jannes and Jambres*: These were the legendary names of the Egyptian wizards who tried to equal Moses.—The comparison of false teachers with wizards was very common in the early church (comp. the legend of Simon, Acts viii.).—*Reprobate concerning* should be "not staunch in."

9. The apparent inconsistency of this verse with 13 and ii. 16 may be explained on some such supposition as that in those passages it is the inner deterioration of the false doctrine itself that is spoken of, and here its outward extension (propagandism) and the duration of its existence.

iii. 10—12. *The apostle's sufferings a universal example.*

10. *Hast fully known* should be "didst adhere to."

11. If Paul were the writer of the Epistle, it would be impos-

sible to understand why he should choose to instance these persecutions of the first missionary journey (Acts xiii. xiv.), when Timothy was not yet in his company. But to the actual writer of the Epistle these persecutions as the first lay nearest to hand, and it never occurred to him that Timothy was not there at the time.

iii. 13. *False teachers.*

13. *Seducers* should be “magicians.”

iii. 14—17. *The advantage of an intimate acquaintance with sacred Scripture.*

15. *And that, &c.*: i.e. “and knowing that,” &c. He is to be made firm in the faith partly by remembering Paul’s own immediate teaching, and partly by seeing that it is in accordance with the ancient holy Scriptures (of the Old Testament).

16. Read, “All Scripture, as inspired by God, is profitable,” &c.—The term “inspired” is generally used of men (e.g. of seers or poets), and has here been extended from the writers of the holy Scriptures (comp. 2 Pet. i. 21) to the Scriptures themselves. By “all Scripture” is meant the Old Testament writings, the inspiration of which had by this time long been a standing article of belief, and was afterwards extended from them to the writings of the New Testament.—*Reproof, correction, instruction*, correspond to the three stages of the moral life: repentance of the evil, conversion to the good, progress in the good (repentance, faith, sanctification).

iv. 1—5. *The preacher’s battle with false teachers.*

1. Read, “I testify before God . . . and by his appearing and his kingdom.” These serve to strengthen the assurance or adjuration.—[The best MSS. omit *therefore*, and read “Christ Jesus” for *our Lord Jesus Christ*.]

3. *Sound doctrine*: The false doctrine is here depicted as the product of unbridled wilfulness and extravagance, in opposition to which sober earnestness is required.

5. *Watch thou*: “be thou sober.” [The Greek word is sometimes used in the sense of being wary, watchful, but its strict meaning is “to be sober.” In its literal sense it is used especially of abstinence from wine, but also in the more comprehensive sense of sobriety.]—*Make full proof of*: “perform honourably” [lit. “fulfil”].



iv. 6—8. *The prospect that is before the apostle.*

6. Read, "For I am already being offered." A similar idea is found in the Epistle to the Philippians (ii. 17), except that what the apostle had there set forth as a possibility, which he did not think likely to be realized (see Phil. i. 25), is here represented as an immediately impending reality. There may be a reference here to the passage in the Epistle to the Philippians.

8. *A* (or strictly, "the") *crown of righteousness*: The victor's crown as the reward of my righteousness, more probably than the victor's crown which consists of righteousness, or the crown of final justification.

iv. 9—21. *Personal wishes, memoranda and greetings.*

On this section, see the remarks already made in the Introduction (pp. 85 sq.).

17. *The preaching*, &c., should be "the proclamation might be made complete," &c.; that is to say, that the gospel might be spread abroad in every direction.

iv. 22. *Conclusion.*

## THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

### i. 1—4. *Introduction.*

1. *According to the faith, &c.*: This indicates the standard of the apostolic teaching, and the result that is aimed at in it.—*After godliness*: i.e. “according to godliness.”

2. Read, “In the hope of eternal life, which God, who is without deception, promised before primeval [or “eternal,” same word in Greek as “eternal” life] times.”

### i. 5—9. *The filling of spiritual offices.*

5. *Ordain elders in every city*: What is meant is not only one elder in each city (comp. “them that are set over you,” in the plur., 1 Thess. v. 12, and the “bishops” or “overseers,” Phil. i. 1). In each city there were several elders or overseers, among whom, in course of time, one came to be distinguished as the first among his peers, and then to be called “the overseer” (bishop). From a comparison of this verse with ver. 7, we may perhaps conclude that at the time when the Epistle was composed a distinction had begun to be made, but was not yet fixed, so that the “bishop” could still be included under the general term of “elders.” By the time when the First Epistle to Timothy was written, this was already changed (see notes on 1 Tim. iii. 1 sq., v. 19).

[6—9. Comp. 1 Tim. iii. 2—7.—*Faithful children*: i.e. probably, “children who are believers.”—*Given to filthy lucre*: same word as in 1 Tim. iii. 8, see note.]

9. Read, “Holding fast the faithful word that is according to the doctrine, that he may be powerful both to exhort in sound doctrine and also to confute gainsayers.”—*Faithful*, i.e. to be relied upon, is the word which corresponds with the doctrine, i.e. with the doctrine of the church. Hence we have here already an ecclesiastical doctrinal canon, a rule of faith. This supposes the circumstances of the second century.



i. 10—16. *Polemic against false teachers.*

10. From this it appears that the false teachers were mostly Jewish Christians. So in the First Epistle to Timothy, they are called "teachers of the Law" (1 Tim. i. 7). Similarly, vv. 14 sq. agree entirely with 1 Tim. iv. 1—8, with its Jewish fables and ascetic precepts. This fits the earlier Gnostics, those of the first quarter of the second century.

12. *A prophet of their own*: The saying here quoted, which is an hexameter verse in the Greek, "Liars the Cretans are, evil beasts and indolent bellies," is probably from Epimenides, who flourished in the sixth century B.C., and who had the reputation among the ancients of being a great soothsayer.

15. *Unto the pure all things are pure*: i.e. He who is pure within, in his feelings and desires, is not morally defiled by the use and enjoyment of external things. It is not the external things that are morally good or evil, but the disposition and will of the man who either uses them rightly or misuses them.—"Both (not "even") their mind and conscience are defiled."—*Their mind*=their disposition, which is defiled by the impure motives connected with their false doctrine (ver. 11).—*Their conscience* is defiled by the consciousness of sin.

[16. *Reprobate*: see note on 2 Tim. iii. 8.]

ii. 1—10. *Moral exhortations for old men and women, for young women and men, and for servants.*

[2. *Grave*: comp. 1 Tim. iii. 4, 8, 11.]

5. *Blasphemed*: see 1 Tim. vi. 1. The meaning is, so that the gospel may not be brought, by the immoral conduct of its confessors, into the evil repute from which Christianity itself has to suffer in consequence of the unworthiness of its outward adherents. We find that the opposite to this (vv. 8, 10) consists in becoming an ornament to Christian doctrine, by corresponding upright conduct, whereby the adversaries are made ashamed. The mainspring of Christian morality is therefore everywhere to be found in the honour of God and Christ. This honour rests upon the appearance of the grace of God (ver. 11) "that bringeth salvation" to men (ver. 11), as well as effects their sanctification (ver. 12).

8. *Of you*: "of us." [The MSS. vary.]

ii. 11—15. *The moral discipline of grace.*

12. *Worldly lusts*: Either such as are characteristic of the world, i.e. of natural humanity; or such as are directed to worldly things, i.e. to external and perishable possessions.—*Soberly, righteously* (or “justly”) *and godly*: Christian virtue in its three bearings, as right conduct towards oneself (self-control, especially in regard to sensual indulgence), towards one’s neighbour (justice), and towards God (piety). The training in these virtues is the work of the grace of God that hath appeared, or of the gospel, partly as holding up the moral ideal, and partly as imparting the power and desire to attain it.

13. Read, “Waiting for the blessed hope and appearance of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—“The blessed hope and appearance;” i.e. the hoped-for beatific appearance, viz. the return of Christ to judgment and to complete his kingdom.—“Our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ:” This is probably the more correct translation, so that “great God” is taken with Jesus Christ in apposition. Not only is the construction of the Greek in favour of this, but also the fact that it is inconsistent with the usage elsewhere to take the “appearance” to refer to God, a phrase which is always used elsewhere of the appearance of Christ. There is, of course, no other example in the New Testament of the use of the word “God” as a simple definition of Jesus Christ; but in other Christian writings, contemporary with our Epistle (second century), it is not uncommon. It was the development of the docetic heresy, which treated Christ as a purely divine and only apparently human being, that first made the church somewhat more cautious in this respect (see note on 1 Tim. ii. 5).

14. The surrender of Christ to death is here said to be with a view to our redemption from rebellion against the Law (i.e. immorality) and to our moral purification. Paul himself regards it as having in view our redemption from the curse of the Law, or from the perdition involved by the Divine wrath. Practically, indeed, the two things are altogether the same.

iii. 1, 2. *Duty toward authorities, and Christian duty generally.*

1. *To be subject, &c.*: “to be subject to rulers and to authorities, and to be obedient.”



iii. 3—8. *The Christian's former conduct in sin; re-birth; renewal through the Holy Spirit; good works.*

3. *Sometimes*: "formerly."

5, 6. Read, "By the bath of re-birth and the renewing (by means) of the Holy Spirit:" Baptism is thus described here because in it the Holy Spirit is imparted ("poured forth" into man [A.V. *shed on us*]), and by the Holy Spirit the inner renewal is then completed, and a new man is formed out of the old man.

7. *Being justified by his grace*: "Justification," i.e. the divine declaration of righteousness, here appears as the result of the communication of the Spirit (ver. 5). We find the reverse of this in the Epistle to the Galatians (Gal. iv. 6), where the communication of the Spirit appears as the result of sonship, i.e. of being justified. Practically, indeed, the one cannot be separated from the other.—*Heirs, &c.*: "heirs of eternal life, according to the hope."

8. *To maintain good works* should be "to devote themselves to good works." Though these are not the ground of our deliverance and salvation (ver. 5), yet they must be a necessary consequence of the grace bestowed upon us, as they also are the final aim of the Divine will (comp. ii. 14; 2 Tim. iii. 17).

iii. 9—11. *Against false teachers.*

9. This description of the false teachers agrees exactly with what is said in 1 Tim. i. 4—8. The stage of development which the false doctrines have here reached seems to be intermediate between that of 2 Tim. and that of 1 Tim. The false teachers are here described as heretics, i.e. as forming a definite party (a sect) in opposition to the ecclesiastical community, but still they are not yet formally excluded from the community, and hope is expressed of their conversion. The attack upon them is altogether milder here than in 1 Tim., but at the same time more distinct than in 2 Tim. From this, in agreement with other indications, we should be able to determine the chronological order of the three Epistles.

11. *Subverted*: "perverted."

iii. 12, 13. *Personal matters.*

iii. 14. *Exhortation to good works.*

[14. *Maintain*: see ver. 8.]

iii. 15. *Conclusion.*

## THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

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A SLAVE named Onesimus ran away from the house of a Christian of Asia Minor named Philemon, who was one of Paul's own converts (ver. 19). If we may trust the Epistle to the Colossians, Philemon and his family resided at Colossæ (Col. iv. 9). Apphia, who is mentioned in ver. 2, was no doubt his wife, and Archippus (see note on Col. iv. 17) one of the members of Philemon's household. In his flight, Onesimus appears to have been exposed to some danger, which led him to have recourse to Paul, who was then a prisoner. It is probable that Paul was in Rome, rather than in Cæsarea, at the time. A runaway slave would be more likely to make his way by sea to the imperial city than by land to Cæsarea. In Rome he would more easily find a place of concealment and means of supporting himself; and only in Rome, where Paul resided in a hired house of his own (Acts xxviii. 30), could he visit him without great risk. Paul took him into his own house, converted him (ver. 10), became deeply attached to him (vv. 12, 13, 16, 17), and sent him back to his master with this Epistle, in which, after the address and salutation (1—3), and a conciliatory introduction (4—7), he proposes to Philemon that he should forgive the offender and receive him as a brother (8—21). After the mention of the apostle's personal circumstances and movements (ver. 22), the conclusion then follows (23—25). This charming private letter is regarded by far the greater number of judges as a genuine Pauline Epistle, and as having been written in the same circumstances as the contemporary Epistle to the Colossians. And those who so regard



it are by no means exclusively adherents to traditional opinion. Still there are others who point to the remarkable resemblance between this and some portions of the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians (see notes), and who regard it as a third with these two, and involved with them in one common lot. Hence it appears that at any rate the unconditional certainty which attaches to the authorship of the four great Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians and Galatians, is wanting even in the case of this Epistle. The only object in the composition of an imaginary Epistle of this kind would have been to set forth the ideal Christian relation between masters and slaves, just as, in the Epistle to the Colossians, the slave question had already been fully treated (Col. iii. 22—25).

## THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

1. *A prisoner*: see note on Eph. iii. 1.—*Fellowlabourer*: Paul hopes that he is a fellowlabourer, inasmuch as he is president of a community of believers meeting in his house. Aquila and Priscilla are spoken of in the same way in Rom. xvi. 3—5.

2. *Apphia*: The mistress of the house is also concerned in the reception of the runaway slave.—“The community in thy house:” see note on Rom. xvi. 3. The community is especially mentioned because Onesimus was now to belong again to this more intimate circle.

3. See note on Rom. i. 7.

4=Col. i. 3; Eph. i. 16.—Read, “I thank my God always when I make mention of thee in my prayers.”

5=Col. i. 4; Eph. i. 15.—*Toward the Lord Jesus and toward all saints*: “In the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints.” [The prepositions are different in Greek, perhaps meaning faith in Christ and love toward the saints.]

6=Col. i. 9; Eph. i. 17 sq.—Read, “That the participation of thy faith may become effectual through the knowledge of all the good which ye have in Christ Jesus.”—This verse states the object of the intercession of ver. 4, viz. that those who share in his faith (i.e. the saints mentioned in ver. 5) might, by means of the faith of Philemon, efficient in love, attain to actual experimental knowledge of the fulness of good, which is at the Lord’s service in the community. Hence “the hearts of the saints have been refreshed” (ver. 7).

7. *Bowels*: “hearts.” [So also in vv. 12, 20, read “heart.”]

8. *Might be much bold*: i.e. might with a bold heart and with confidence, without fear command thee.

9. *For love’s sake*: so that I may not interfere with the free exercise of its power.—*Beseech*: “exhort.”



10. *Son* [lit. "child"]: so Timothy, as converted by Paul, is called his son (1 Cor. iv. 17).

11. *Profitable*: Here there is a reference to the name Onesimus, which means useful or profitable.

[12. See note on ver. 7.]

13. *In thy stead* should be "for thee."—Philemon regards any service done to Paul as done to himself, so that Onesimus, in becoming Paul's servant, would have re-entered the service of his own master.—*Bonds of the gospel*: bonds into which the preaching of the gospel has brought him.

14. *Thy benefit*: The apostle thinks that Philemon would have no objection to his retaining the slave without more ado, but he sends him home again in order to give the master full opportunity of himself freely pardoning him and receiving him again into his household.

15. Paul has abstained from interfering in the matter on his own account, lest he should perhaps be opposing some divine purpose.

16. *Above a servant*: This does not mean that Onesimus is to cease to be a servant.—*In the flesh*: in the natural and earthly relation, according to which Onesimus belonged to the household of Philemon.

17. *Partner*: i.e. partner in Christianity.

18. *If he hath wronged thee*: Onesimus must have run away in consequence of some neglect of duty whereby his master had suffered.

19. A formal and legally valid agreement on the part of the apostle to pay what is owing. At the same time, however, the apostle reminds his wealthy convert that he may make counter-demands of a still greater amount.

[20. See note on ver. 7.]

21. *I wrote*: "I have written."

22. Comp. Phil. i. 25, ii. 24.

23, 24 = Col. iv. 10, 12, 14.

[24. *Marcus, Lucas*: better, "Mark," "Luke," as elsewhere.]

[25. Comp. Gal. vi. 18, and see note on Phil. iv. 23.]

## THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

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### 1. THE AUTHOR OF THE EPISTLE AND HIS READERS.

APPENDED to the Epistles of the Apostle Paul, or sometimes inserted amongst them, we find an Epistle with the title, "To the Hebrews." [It is only the later MSS. that call it the Epistle of *Paul* to the Hebrews, as in A.V.] The writer does not give his own name, as Paul does in all his Epistles, nor is there any express indication of the circle of readers for whom the Epistle is intended. The opinion of the early church concerning it was divided. Even in the East, where the Epistle to the Hebrews was accepted, the difference of its form from that of the other Pauline Epistles could not but be early remarked. In Alexandria, it was supposed at first that Paul, being an apostle to the Gentiles, was prevented by modesty from putting his name to an Epistle which was addressed to believing Hebrews. Clement of Alexandria (ob. post 211 A.D.) further perceived that Paul, who had not put his name to the Epistle lest he should frighten the Jewish Christians away from it, could not have written it as it stands. Paul must have written it in Hebrew, and Luke have translated it into Greek. Origen (ob. 254) went a step further, and saw that the Epistle could not have been written by Paul at all. He was "rude in speech" (2 Cor. xi. 6), and it was of far too Hellenic a style to have been written by him. Nevertheless, Origen recognized the ideas of Paul in the Epistle. Some other writer, perhaps Clement of Rome, as some said, or



Luke, as others said, must have set forth Paul's ideas in this peculiar style. Notwithstanding all this, however, the Epistle retained its position in the East. In the West, on the other hand, not only was its Pauline authorship denied, but the Epistle itself was entirely rejected. A Western catalogue of the sacred writings of the New Testament, dating from the end of the second century, speaks of it under the title of an Epistle "to the Alexandrians," and calls it an "imposture" foisted upon Paul in support of the heresy of Marcion. Tertullian (ob. circa 220 A.D.) ascribes the Epistle to the Hebrews to Barnabas, and refuses to give it full recognition as holy Scripture. Even Jerome (ob. 420) mentions that the Epistle to the Hebrews is rejected among the Latins. About this time, however, Augustine (ob. 430) succeeded in securing the recognition of the Epistle in the West.

The vigorous spirit of the Reformation emancipated itself from traditional opinion with regard to the Epistle to the Hebrews. Luther says: "That the Epistle to the Hebrews is neither from the hand of St. Paul, nor of any other apostle, is proved by ii. 3. It is plain that the writer here speaks of the apostles as himself one of their disciples. For St. Paul testifies with power (Gal. i. 1) that he has received his gospel, not from man, but from God himself. And beside this, it containeth a hard knot, inasmuch as in the sixth and tenth chapters it altogether denieth and refuseth repentance unto sinners after baptism; and in the twelfth chapter, ver. 17, it saith that Esau sought repentance and found it not. And this seemeth to be contrary to all Gospels and Epistles. And although one may explain this, yet the words are so clear that I know not whether it be sufficient so to do. It seemeth to me that it is an Epistle composed of many pieces, and treateth not of one thing in an orderly manner. However this may be, it is an exceeding fine Epistle, which speaketh in a manner both masterly and profound of the priesthood of Christ, out of the Scripture, and also expoundeth the Old Testament finely and richly, so that it is evident that it is the work of an excellent and learned man, who was a disciple of the apostles and had

learnt much of them, and who also had experience in the faith, and skill in the Scriptures. And although he layeth not the foundation of faith, as he himself testifieth (vi. 1), which also is the office of an apostle, yet he buildeth handsomely thereupon gold, silver, precious stones, as saith St. Paul (1 Cor. iii. 12). Wherefore, though perhaps there be some wood, straw or hay mixed therewith, this shall not hinder us from receiving so fine a doctrine with all honour. And yet we may not make it equal to the apostolic Epistles. But who hath written it is unknown, and is like to remain unknown for a time; and indeed it is no great matter." And yet even Luther did not fail to make the acute suggestion that very likely Apollos might prove to be the author of the Epistle: "This Apollo," he says, "was a man of great understanding; the Epistle *Hebræorum* is surely his." And though it was possible for Protestant orthodoxy to fall back into the traditional theory of the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is already one of the firmly established results of scientific scriptural research that *Paul cannot have been the author*.

In the Epistle (ii. 3) it is assumed that the word of salvation was first proclaimed by the Lord himself, and then came down through his immediate hearers to the author of the Epistle and his readers. This cannot have been written by Paul, who declares that he received his gospel from God and Christ without any human mediation (Gal. i. 12). Paul, who had passed through the chief school of the scriptural learning of the Jews in Jerusalem, could not fall into such errors regarding sacrifice and the sanctuary as we meet with in this Epistle, when, for example, it represents the high-priests as sacrificing daily (vii. 27, comp. x. 11), or places the altar of incense in the Holy of Holies, and the golden vase of manna and Aaron's staff in the ark of the covenant (ix. 4). Moreover, the writer is more eloquent, and has a greater command of the Greek language, than Paul (see 2 Cor. x. 10, xi. 6). The Epistle to the Hebrews betrays the influence of the Alexandrian school in a greater degree than the Epistles



of Paul, both in its interpretation of Scripture and in its actual doctrine. In its scriptural exegesis, especially, it is distinguished by the "types" of that which is now fulfilled, which it finds in Old Testament history and ordinances of the Law. In doctrine it is distinguished by the idea of the divine Logos (word, or reason), by means of which the Alexandrian Jew, Philo (ob. post A.D. 41), had combined Old Testament theology with Greek philosophy, here appearing as an expression of the divine nature of Christ (Heb. i. 1, 2, iv. 12, 13). In Philo, the divine Logos was the Deity as revealed and immanent. Our author not only betrays the general influence of Philo, but is even acquainted with his writings (Heb. xiii. 5). He also departs from the doctrine of Paul in certain details. Paul declares that the Law itself is spiritual (Rom. vii. 14). The Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of a Law of a carnal commandment (vii. 16) and of carnal ordinances (ix. 10). Paul knows of no mediator except in the case of the old Law (Gal. iii. 19). The Epistle to the Hebrews calls Christ the mediator of the new covenant (viii. 6, ix. 15, xii. 24).

If, on the one hand, the Epistle to the Hebrews cannot have been written by Paul, on the other hand it was not written very long after his death, certainly not after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. It must have been written while the temple service at Jerusalem still remained in all its magnificence. In the demonstration of the deficiencies of the Jewish hierarchical system there is no mention of the crushing blow which it suffered by the destruction of the temple. Sacrifice is expressly spoken of as a thing of the present (viii. 4, ix. 8, 9). It is true that the writer never speaks of the temple, but only of the Mosaic tabernacle; but this is due simply to the fact that he always has in view the original Mosaic institutions. From the fact that Timothy's imprisonment is over, and that there is a greeting from "them from Italy" (Heb. xiii. 23, 24), we may infer that the Epistle was written soon after the Neronian persecution of the Christians, which took place in the year 64 A.D.

The Epistle to the Hebrews must have been written, then, by

some one who belonged to the school of Paul and was a friend of Timothy. The Levite Barnabas of Cyprus (Acts iv. 36), to whom the Epistle was sometimes ascribed by the ancient Christians, is excluded by the same objections in regard to the temple and matters connected therewith that apply to the Pauline authorship. There is no definite reason for assigning the Epistle to Luke. Still less can we suppose that it is from the hand of Clement of Rome. Everything, however, converges upon *Apollos*, the subject of Luther's happy guess. According to the Book of Acts (xviii. 24 sqq.), Apollos was a learned Jew of Alexandria, who, having been already "instructed in the way of the Lord," came to Ephesus (about 55 A.D.), and there spake and taught diligently the things concerning Jesus, although he knew only the baptism of John. This Christianity of the baptism of John would be a lower Jewish-Essenic stage of Christianity, which did not yet make any distinction between Christian baptism and the baptism of John. Apollos, then, would come from Alexandria, where he may very well have passed through the school of Philo, to Ephesus, being at this time a Jewish Christian such as is described in Heb. vi. 1, 2. Here he was instructed by Priscilla and Aquila in the teachings of Paul. Having been thus introduced to the Pauline conception of Christianity, he went into Achaia (to Corinth), where he proved from the Scriptures, especially to the unbelieving Jews, that Jesus was the Christ. In Corinth, Apollos doubtless carried on the work of Paul, but after a fashion peculiar to himself, standing probably in somewhat the same relation to Paul as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (see 1 Cor. i. 12, iii. 4—6, iv. 6). In the First Epistle to the Corinthians, which will have been written in the year 58, we find Apollos again at Ephesus, where he is mentioned in conjunction with Timothy (xvi. 10—12), with whom he was no doubt acquainted. In the Epistle to Titus (iii. 13) he is mentioned again. Apollos then would belong first to the school of Philo, then to the Jewish Christians of Alexandria, to whom Christianity might very well be early preached by the immediate hearers of Jesus (Heb. ii. 3),



and then in Ephesus he joined the school of Paul and became intimately acquainted with Timothy.

If Apollos was probably the author of the Epistle, we must then look for its readers in Alexandria; and there is even an ancient title to the Epistle, from which it would seem that it was addressed to that city. Doubtless the name "Hebrews" gave rise early to the idea that it was addressed to the primitive Christian community in Palestine. Now even supposing it to be possible that a writer might employ the Greek language in addressing the members of that community, it was plainly the custom there to use the original text of the holy Scriptures, and not the Greek version. Our author, however, rests all his arguments upon the Greek version of the "Seventy," with all its errors (see Heb. x. 5, xi. 21), and without paying any attention whatever to the original. Heb. ii. 3, again, would not be addressed to the original community, the nucleus of which was formed by hearers of the Lord himself. No one could use towards that community such language as we find in Heb. v. 12 sq., standing as it did at the head of all Christendom. The good offices to the saints for which the readers are praised (Heb. vi. 10) were probably directed toward the primitive community in Jerusalem. Another reason why the Epistle to the Hebrews cannot have been addressed to the primitive community in Jerusalem is, that that community had suffered, on any hypothesis, more than one bloody persecution (Acts vii. 54 sq., xii. 1 sq.), including that of the year 62, in which James, the brother of the Lord, perished. The Hebrews of our Epistle, on the contrary, though they had suffered some tribulation very soon after their conversion (Heb. x. 32 sqq.), and still had contests to endure, had not yet come to the shedding of blood (xii. 4). The Hebrews of this Epistle are certainly not to be sought in Palestine. It is an error, again, to suppose that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written to an un-mixed Jewish-Christian community. These Hebrews did not form a complete Christian community. They were only a part, though they may have been the original nucleus, of a larger Christian

community, from whose gatherings they were already beginning to absent themselves (x. 25), whose rulers they are exhorted to obey (xiii. 17), and whose rulers and members they are to greet (xiii. 24). This also shows us that the Epistle cannot have been addressed to any Palestinian community.

But, on the other hand, the Epistle may very well have been addressed to Alexandria. The believing Hebrews of that city would share the sufferings of the Jewish persecution under the emperor Caius Caligula (38—41 A.D.) (Heb. x. 32 sq.). Some time during the long period of its existence (ii. 3, v. 11 sq.) the community may have lost by death its original president (Heb. xiii. 7). They might remain very little changed, while the Gentile Christians by degrees increased till they were in a majority. In Alexandria there was so numerous a Jewish population, that the hostility of the unbelieving Jews which the believing Hebrews had to contend with (Heb. xii. 3 sq.) is nowhere more intelligible than here. Jerusalem was not too far from Alexandria for the believing Hebrews to be able to keep up active intercourse with the Jewish hierarchy by means of journeys to the festivals and pilgrimages from time to time to the temple (see Acts viii. 27, xxi. 23 sq., xxii. 17, xxiv. 11, 17). This made it necessary to keep them to their Christian faith (Heb. iii. 1, iv. 14, x. 23), and only here could such an Alexandrian culture be assumed in the appeal. That the earliest Alexandrian Fathers know nothing of the Epistle being addressed to Alexandria is also explained by the fact that these "Hebrews" did not form an unmixed Jewish-Christian community, but only a portion of a larger community consisting mainly of Gentile Christians. Relying simply on the fact that it is addressed to "the Hebrews," they supposed that it must have been intended for the Christians in Palestine. The supposition that it was intended for Alexandria also falls in admirably with the hypothesis that it was written by Apollos, who was himself one of these very Hebrews (Heb. xiii. 19). We can scarcely suppose that it was addressed to Rome, where the blood of Christians



had flowed freely since the year 54. This would be inconsistent with Heb. xii. 4.

If, then, the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by Apollos and addressed to the Jewish Christians of Alexandria, it would be written soon after the Neronian persecution of the Christians in Rome, which took place in the year 64 (see Heb. xiii. 24), and before the bloody persecution of the Jews in Alexandria in the year 66. The Christian Hebrews could not altogether escape the latter persecution, so that Heb. xii. 4 could not have been written after it. It is no wonder that the Epistle of James (ii. 25), which was written during the reign of Domitian (A.D. 81—96), refers to the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 31).

The Epistle to the Hebrews is as far as possible from being simply a doctrinal disquisition. It is written to meet an urgent necessity. It is occasioned by the danger to which the Christian confession of faith on the part of the Hebrews was exposed partly by its persistent adherence to the mere elements of Christianity (Heb. v. 12—vi. 2) and partly by the attempts of the unbelieving Jews to persuade it to actual apostasy from Christianity (Heb. iii. 12, vi. 4—6, x. 28 sqq., xii. 25). Hence the repeated exhortations to hold fast to the Christian confession (Heb. iv. 14, x. 23, comp. iii. 1).

## 2. DOCTRINE.

The writer, taking his stand upon Pauline principles, addresses himself to a Jewish Christianity which had scarcely passed beyond unbelieving Judaism, and now threatened to relapse into it. He is familiar with the Epistles of Paul (comp. Heb. vi. 6 with Gal. iii. 1; Heb. v. 12 with 1 Cor. iii. 2; Heb. v. 14 with 1 Cor. ii. 6; Heb. x. 30 with Rom. xii. 19, &c.). Like Paul (Gal. iii. 19), he represents the Old Testament religion of the Law as proclaimed by angels (Heb. ii. 2). Like Paul (Gal. iii. 19; Rom. v. 20, x. 4), he attaches only a temporary validity to the Law, lasting until the time of reformation, i.e. until the redeeming

sacrifice of Christ (Heb. ix. 10). Like Paul (Gal. iii. 16 sq.), he speaks of the seed of Abraham whose cause the Son of God took upon himself (Heb. ii. 16). Like Paul, he emphasizes the importance of faith (Heb. iv. 2, vi. 12), and expressly affirms the righteousness of faith (Heb. x. 38, 39, xi. 6, 33). But the Paulinism of the Epistle to the Hebrews betrays at the same time the peculiar school of Jewish Alexandrianism, which was most fully developed in Philo, both in its manner of dealing with Scripture and also in its doctrine concerning the divine Logos.

In its freedom with regard to the Jewish religion of the Law, the Epistle to the Hebrews is not inferior to Paul himself. Here, as in Paul's writings, the religion of the Law is preceded by justification by faith; but here the latter is not limited to faith in the promise of a seed which was given to Abraham. Here justifying faith is more generally conceived, and is more comprehensive (Heb. viii. 11) than in Paul's writings. Faith is confidence in that which is hoped for, an unhesitating conviction of unseen things generally. Abraham no longer appears, as in Paul, as the forefather of all believers. Saving faith begins as far back as Abel, Enoch, Noah, and, in the case of Abraham himself, with the departure from Canaan. The religion of the Law is represented by our author, as by Paul, as only an indirect revelation of God through angels (Heb. ii. 2), and by angels to whom the present world has been put in subjection (ii. 5). He lays even more emphasis upon the imperfection of the Law than Paul himself. The Law is weak and powerless, and has made nothing perfect (vii. 18, 19). Its ordinances are dead works (vi. 1, ix. 14). The Law has only a shadow of good things to come (x. 1). It is no longer in itself spiritual (as in Rom. vii. 12, 14), but contains carnal commandments and precepts (Heb. vii. 16, ix. 10). With its diverse commands concerning meats, it is positively alien to Christianity (xiii. 9). Further, in the Epistle to the Hebrews it is not the moral element in the religion of the Law, as in Paul's writings, but the priesthood and the sacrificial system, that are chiefly dwelt upon.—The non-Levitical priesthood of Melchi-



sedec, to which Abraham, the ancestor of the Jews, and indeed of Levi himself, did homage with the offering of tithe, takes precedence in the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. vii.) of the priesthood of the Law. It was not until after this important phenomenon that the sanctuary of the Law was erected, the worldly sanctuary of this creation (ix. 1, 11), only a type of the true heavenly sanctuary (ix. 24), only a shadow of heavenly things (viii. 5, x. 1). The very repetition of the sacrifices of the Levitical priests proves their incompleteness (x. 1, 2). They produce only a purifying of the flesh (ix. 13), do not take away sins (x. 11), and do not purify the conscience (ix. 9).—The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (viii. 7 sqq.) finds in Jer. xxxi. 31 sqq. proof of the imperfection of the old covenant in the announcement of a new covenant, with laws for the mind written in the heart. Holy Scripture itself has declared the old covenant obsolete, in that it waxeth old nigh unto vanishing away. Long after the existence of the priesthood of the Law, an eternal priest of the order of Melchisedec is promised in Psalm cx. 4 (Heb. v. 6, 10, vi. 20, vii. 11, 17).

In its view of the new covenant, the Epistle to the Hebrews to some extent differs throughout from Paul, looking less to what takes place in man than to what is offered on the part of God. Here the doctrine of the nature of Christ comes into the foreground. Paul himself conceived of the Redeemer only as the heavenly man (1 Cor. xv. 47; Rom. v. 15; Phil. ii. 6 sq.). The Epistle to the Hebrews, availing itself of Philo's doctrine of the Logos, proceeds to the deity of Christ. In connection with the Solomonic doctrine of Wisdom (comp. Heb. i. 2, 3, with Wisd. of Sol. vii. 25—27), Christ is raised to the sphere of divine beings (Heb. i. 3, 8); and in another passage (iv. 12, 13) he is distinctly declared to be the divine Logos. Here, then, the Christian Messianic faith is already amalgamated with the Philonic idea of the Logos. The Redeemer is conceived of as the central point of a supernatural world. He is the reflection of the Divine glory, the imprint of the Divine nature, for whom and

through whom are all things (i. 2, 3, ii. 10). The deity of Christ is an expression of the exaltation of the new revelation of God above the old revelation in Judaism by means of angels.

The new complete revelation of God took place in the first instance, according to our Epistle, by the Son of God taking upon himself flesh and blood, and becoming like unto men (ii. 14, 17, comp. x. 5). He shared the universal human lot of temptation, yet remained without sin (iv. 15, vii. 26). He learnt obedience in the school of suffering (v. 7, 8). Yet it was only by his death, as the perfect sacrifice, that he completed the redemption proper as a purification from sins (i. 3). Here there is nothing new in the mere conception of the death of Christ as a sacrifice, but what is new is, that the Epistle to the Hebrews represents the Redeemer as the true high-priest, who offered himself, once for all, as a blameless sacrifice (ix. 14), and who, by his own blood, has founded the new covenant (ix. 13 sq., x. 29, xiii. 20). His death was a unique sacrifice (vii. 27, ix. 14, 26, 28, x. 10, 11, 14) for heavenly things (ix. 23), capable of taking away sins. Thus the priesthood, after the order of Melchisedec, was fulfilled. The Redeemer has now become the high-priest of heaven (iv. 14, vi. 19, 20, viii. 2, ix. 11, 24). He sits at the right hand of God (i. 3, viii. 1, x. 12, xii. 2) as a priest for ever (vii. 21 sqq.). Thus by his blood he has consecrated the entrance to the heavenly sanctuary (x. 19), and purified the consciences from dead works, to serve the living God (ix. 14).

The doctrines of the deity of Christ and his high-priesthood have given a new turn to Paul's doctrine of justifying faith. On the one hand, it has been placed more in the background, while, on the other hand, it has been made more universal. But still saving faith forms a distinct contrast to the Jewish religion of the Law (vi. 1, ix. 10). The manifestation of the heavenly priesthood has revealed the worthlessness of the earthly (viii. 4). The Epistle to the Hebrews occupies a position distinctly opposed to Judaism. The Jews, who were accustomed to speak of the Gentiles without more ado as sinners, are here themselves



described as sinners (xii. 3, comp. vii. 26). The writer not only calls upon the believing Hebrews to go on beyond the elements, the lower Jewish-Christian stages of Christianity, and advance at length to Christian perfection (vi. 1 sq.), but he bids them depart entirely from the Jewish religious communion (xiii. 13). The Epistle to the Hebrews, in fact, openly teaches that apostasy from Moses, of teaching which Paul is accused by the Jewish Christians in the Book of Acts (Acts xxi. 21). The universality of Christian salvation which is declared in ii. 9, 15, is by no means surrendered again by a limitation to the natural posterity of Abraham and the Jewish people in ii. 16, 17.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is one of the most important of those writings which effected the separation of Christianity from Judaism. It is in every respect a worthy sequel to the Epistles of Paul, and by its amalgamation of Paulinism and Jewish Alexandrianism it successfully prepared the way for the peculiar doctrinal development of Christianity.

### 3. ARGUMENT.

The Epistle to the Hebrews opens straight away with a statement of the superiority of the Christian revelation of God to the Jewish (i. 1—4). In this statement the writer depends mainly upon the deity of Christ, but also points out at the same time his high-priesthood. The scriptural proof of the exaltation of Christ as the Son of God, and himself God, above the angels, is immediately followed by an exhortation to consider well the new revelation through the Son, which is higher than the ancient revelation through angels (i. 5—ii. 4). The goal also of the salvation of the new revelation exalts it above the angels to whom the present world is subject. The prospect of a future world, which will be given into subjection to man, has been revealed to the believers through the death and glorification of the Redeemer, who, as early as the latter part of this section of the Epistle, is spoken of as a high-priest (ii. 5—18). Jesus is then

set forth as apostle and high-priest of the Christian faith, and his exaltation above Moses in this respect is pointed out (iii. 1—6). By his interpretation of a passage of Scripture (Ps. xcv. 7—11) the writer then endeavours to preserve the Hebrews from apostasy, and to direct them to the divine invitation to a rest that awaits them (iii. 7—iv. 13).

The way has now been prepared for the proper kernel of the Epistle (iv. 14—x. 18), in which is developed the high-priesthood of Jesus in opposition to the Levitical priesthood of Judaism. First, the readers are admonished, having Jesus as high-priest and Son of God, to hold fast the confession of faith, which was endangered by Judaism itself (iv. 14—v. 10). The contrast between the high-priesthood of Christ and the high-priesthood of the Jewish Law, leads on to the conception of Christ as a high-priest after the order of Melchisedec (Ps. cx. 4). This new conception of Christ, however, the writer cannot set forth to the Hebrews whom he is addressing, without first censuring the low stage of their Christianity, and warning them of the terrible results of apostasy (v. 11—vi. 20). It is not till he has done this that he proceeds to expound the superiority of Christ's high-priesthood after the order of Melchisedec to the Levitical priesthood of Judaism (vii. 1—x. 18). This exposition is as anti-Jewish as it is Alexandrian, and indeed Philonic. The perfection of the high-priesthood of Christ, of whom Melchisedec was the type, consists, according to our author, on the one hand in the revelation of heavenly things, of which the Law with its earthly sanctuary was but a shadow, and on the other hand in the inner change in the mind which is purified and reconciled by it.

The section which then follows (x. 19—39) shows us that even this doctrinal exposition has also a very practical aim, for here the readers are admonished firmly to maintain their Christian faith, and not to forsake the gatherings of the Christian community; then a second time a terrible judgment is threatened against those who fall away from the Christian faith, and the readers are reminded of the firmness they displayed in the period



immediately following their conversion. The mention of faith next leads to a scriptural demonstration of the fundamental doctrine of Paulinism, the doctrine of righteousness by faith (xi.), which was still a stumbling-block to the Jewish Christians. After this doctrinal exposition, the writer returns again to his exhortation (xii.). The Hebrews are exhorted to stand fast in the fight against Jewish hostility, and once more emphatically warned against apostasy from Christianity.

In conclusion (xiii.), we have further special exhortations, in which the general purpose of the whole composition is not lost sight of. Jewish-Christian doctrines are set down as alien to Christianity (xiii. 9). Complete separation from the Jewish religious communion is demanded (xiii. 13). The letter then closes, in genuine epistolary style, with the personal wish of the writer soon to be restored to his readers (xiii. 18 sq.), the announcement of his speedy arrival, in company with the liberated Timothy (xiii. 23), and general greetings.

## THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

### i. 1—4. *The superiority of the Christian revelation to the Jewish.*

Here the two fundamental ideas of the deity and the high-priesthood of Christ are emphatically brought forward.

2. *Whom he hath appointed heir of all things*: The inheritance of the world was regarded as the promise given to Abraham (Rom. iv. 13). The Christians are joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. viii. 17), heirs of God through Christ (Gal. iv. 7). Christ is heir of all things, as the head of the future world.—“Through whom he also made the world-ages” (not *the worlds*): Christ is here represented as the divine word (the Logos) of Jewish Alexandrianism as developed by Philo, according to which the whole creation took place by means of the word (Logos) of God; just as, according to the pre-Philonic Wisdom of Solomon (Wisd. vii. 27), all things were created by means of the wisdom of God. The great world-ages are two, the present and the future (Matt. xii. 32). The future world-age is also mentioned in Heb. vi. 5.

3. Read, “Who being the reflection of his glory and the imprint of his being, and bearing all things with the word of his power, and having made the purification of our sins through himself, hath sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high.”—“Reflection . . . imprint.” The Alexandrian book of the Wisdom of Solomon had already used similar language with regard to the wisdom of God (Wisd. vii. 26). The school of Philo conceived of the Divine wisdom expressly as the word (Logos) of God.—“Bearing all things with the word of his power.” According to Philo, the word (Logos) of God is the immanent God himself. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the Son of God is so conceived of.—“Having made the purification of our sins through himself.” The Son of God, in his manifestation in the flesh upon earth, has completed the redemption of sinful humanity by his death. Here we have already an indica-



tion of the high-priestly office of Christ.—“Hath sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high:” Christ exalted after his redeeming death.

i. 5—14. *Demonstration of Christ's exaltation above the angels from various passages in the Old Testament.*

All the quotations in this passage are from the Greek version.

6. Read, “But when he shall again have brought in the first-born into the world,” &c.—The quotation is from Ps. xcvi. 7, here applied to the return of Christ in his glory. It is only in the Greek version that there is any mention of the worship of all the angels.

7. *Spirits* should be “winds.”

8, 9. From Ps. xlv. 6 sq., where, according to our author, Christ is addressed as God.—*A sceptre of righteousness*: lit. “a sceptre of straightness.”—*Therefore God, even thy God*, &c.: “Therefore, O God, thy God hath anointed thee,” &c.

10—12. From Ps. cii. 25—27. Only in the Greek version could the writer find Christ spoken of as God.

ii. 1—4. *Exhortation to consider well the new revelation.*

Christ being thus exalted, the new revelation through the Son of God should be the more earnestly considered and taken to heart. It is far higher than the old revelation of the religion of the Law which the writer of our Epistle (ii. 2), like Paul (Gal. iii. 19), represents as proclaimed by angels (comp. also Acts vii. 53), a view derived from the description of God's retinue of angels at the giving of the Law (Ps. lxxviii. 11; comp. also the Greek version of Deut. xxxiii. 2), of which Paul and the author of our Epistle avail themselves to depreciate to some extent the religion of the Law. [The reading of the last words of Deut. xxxiii. 2 is doubtful. The Greek version has, “On his right hand were angels with him.” Psalm lxxviii. 11 should probably be rendered, “Yahveh giveth the word; the women who tell the tidings are a great host,” the real reference being then to some victory over the enemies of Israel.]

1. “Lest at any time we should be swept past” (not, *let them slip*): i.e. lest we should be carried away past salvation. Human life is represented under the figure of a stormy voyage, and salvation as the harbour in which we are safe.

2. *For if, &c.*: “For if the word spoken through angels was made firm.”

3. *If we neglect* should be “if we have neglected.”—*By*: “through.”—The salvation preached at first through the Lord himself has been confirmed by those who heard him, not only to the readers, but also to the writer himself. Hence neither could Paul be the writer, nor the primitive community in Palestine the readers.

4. Read, “God bearing witness together with them by signs, wonders and divers powers, and by communication of the Holy Spirit according to his will.”—God himself here bears witness in favour of the preaching of the gospel by means of miraculous powers and gifts of the Spirit (comp. 1 Cor. xii. ; Gal. iii. 5).

ii. 5—18. *The superiority not only of the origin but also of the goal.*

The salvation of the new revelation is superior to the angels, to whom the present world is subject, not only in its origin, but also in its goal.

ii. 5.

It is not the future, but only the present, world that is subject to the angels. The later Jews regarded the seventy or seventy-two nations of the world as under the protection of special guardian angels (Dan. x. 13, 20 ; Ecclesiast. xvii. 17 ; comp. also the Greek version of Deut. xxxii. 8). [The Greek version of Deut. xxxii. 8 reads, “When the Most High divided the nations, the sons of Adam whom he scattered, he set the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God.”]

ii. 6—9.

The writer interprets Ps. viii. 5—7 (where the Psalmist says that God has made man a little lower than the angels, and made all things subject unto him) to mean that God has made man inferior to the angels for a little while, and that finally all things, even the angels, shall be subject to him. Thus the words of the Psalm have already been fulfilled in Jesus, who has tasted death for all and has been crowned with glory.

6. *Visitest* should be “regardest.”

7. *Thou madest him, &c.*, should be, “for a little while thou hast made him lower than the angels,” &c.



9. *Who was made, &c.*, should be, “who for a little while was made lower than the angels.”

ii. 10.

Read, “For it became him to make perfect through sufferings, as the general of their salvation, him for whose sake are all things, and through whom are all things, after he had brought many sons unto glory.”—“Him for whose sake,” &c.: i.e. the Son of God (Heb. i. 2).—“After he,” &c.: i.e. the Son of God upon earth.—“General:” i.e. leader.

ii. 11—18.

The perfecting of the Son through sufferings was necessary for the sake of the fellowship between the Redeemer and the redeemed. The Redeemer calls those who are to be redeemed his brothers (Ps. xxii. 22), expresses as a man his confidence in God (Is. viii. 17), and he as the Son of God speaks of the redeemed as children of God (Is. viii. 18) and therefore his brothers. In order, therefore, that he might be made like unto them, he has taken upon him flesh and blood; yea, he has even suffered death in order that he might take away the power of the devil, who (through sin, see Rom. v. 12) had the power of death, and that he might deliver men from the slavery of the fear of death. He takes up the cause, not of angels, but of the seed of Abraham. The phrase “seed of Abraham” need not be taken in the natural sense, but may very well be understood, as in Paul, of the spiritual descendants of Abraham, i.e. men who are believers. So also the “house of God” (iii. 6, x. 21) is Christendom; “that within the veil” (vi. 19) is heaven (comp. ix. 24). The veil is interpreted as the flesh of Jesus (x. 20). The camp (xiii. 13) is the Jewish community. Because the Son of God espouses the cause of (believing) men, it was necessary that he should be made like them in all things, that he might be merciful, and as a faithful high-priest atone for the sins of the people, i.e. not only of the Jewish people, but of the true (believing) people of God, i.e. of Christendom (see iv. 9, xiii. 12).

12. *Church*: “community.”

14. *Are partakers*: lit. “have been made partakers.”

16. Read, “For he taketh not up the cause of angels, but of the seed of Abraham doth he take up the cause.”

iii. 1—iv. 13. *Exhortation not to lose sight of the Christian confession and trifle it away in Mosaism.*

iii. 1.

The Hebrews are exhorted to give heed to the apostle (i.e. one who is sent by God) and high-priest of the Christian confession, Jesus, who has brought the new revelation of Christianity, and completed the reconciliation of the believers with God. This is the first express exhortation to hold fast to the Christian confession, which was endangered by Mosaism (comp. iv. 14, x. 23).

iii. 2—6.

The exaltation of Christ above Moses. Christ is faithful unto God, who hath made him. Moses was only faithful in the house of God as a servant (Num. xii. 7). Christ, as Son of God, is over the house of God, which in its perfection is Christendom.

2. *Appointed* should be "made" or "created."

3. *Inasmuch as* should be "in the same degree that."

5. *To be spoken after*: "to be spoken."

6. *His own* should be "His," i.e. God's.

iii. 7—iv. 13.

Discussion of Ps. xcv. 7—11, with a view to the preservation of the Hebrews (addressed in the Epistle) from falling away from the Christian confession into pure Mosaism. Long after the Mosaic time they are called upon, "to-day," if they hear the voice of God, not to harden their hearts, as did the people of the forty years' wandering in the wilderness, who forfeited their admission into the divine rest. Let the Christian Hebrews look to it that no one in unbelief fall away from the living God into Mosaism (iii. 12). Still that same word "to-day" is uttered, still the promise remains of admission to the divine rest. This promise is not only later than God's rest after creation (iv. 4), but it is also later than the Mosaic age, and has by no means been fulfilled by Joshua's conquest of the promised land (iv. 8). This promised divine rest lies altogether beyond Mosaism. Let them beware then of that unbelief whereby those who lived in the days of Moses forfeited their admission to the rest which God had provided! The word (Logos) of God, which speaks in the holy Scripture, is able to judge the thoughts and intent of the heart—yea, it is omniscient (iv. 12, 13); and in saying this the



writer gradually comes to identify the word of Scripture with the divine Logos of the Alexandrian school, with which at the beginning of the Epistle (i. 2, 3) he practically identified the Son of God, with whom indeed he is really concerned throughout.

10. *And they, &c.*, should be “and they (with emphasis on *they*) did not recognize my ways.”

16. Read, “For who were they that heard and provoked? Was it not all that came out of Egypt by Moses?”

18. *Believed not* should be “were disobedient.”

iv. 1. *Fear*: i.e. “take care.”—*To come short*: strictly, “to have come short.”

3. *If they shall enter*: “they shall not enter.”—There should only be a comma at the end of this verse.

5. *If they shall*: “they shall not.”

6. *Unbelief* should be “disobedience.”

8. *Jesus*: “Joshua.” [Jesus is the Greek form of the name.]

9. *A rest*: lit. “a keeping of sabbath.”

11. *Unbelief* should be “disobedience.”

12. *Quick*: i.e. “living.”—*Discerner*: “judge.”

13. *With whom we have to do* should be “of whom we speak.”

iv. 14—v. 10. *Exhortation on the ground of the possession of this high-priest.*

Those who possess this high-priest are exhorted to remain faithful to the Christian confession, and not to be blinded or enticed away by the brilliancy of the Jewish high-priesthood.

iv. 14—16.

14. Read, “Who has passed through (not *into*) the heavens” (comp. vii. 26, ix. 11; Eph. iv. 10), i.e. into the Holy of Holies, where, exalted above all the heavens, he enjoys full communion with God.

15. *The feeling of*: “sympathy with.”

v. 1—6.

v. 2. *That are out of the way*: “that go astray.”

3. The Jewish high-priest has to offer sacrifice not only for the sins of the people, but also for his own sins (comp. vii. 27).—*By reason hereof*: i.e. because of his infirmity (ver. 2).

4. He has been called to his office like Aaron.

5, 6. And Christ also has a divine calling as Son of God (Ps. ii. 7), and as a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec (Ps. cx. 4).

## v. 7—10.

In the days of his flesh, in the school of suffering, in bitter agony of soul (comp. Matt. xxvi. 39 sqq.), he learnt obedience; but at the same time he was heard, so that now he is able to become the author of eternal salvation unto all who obey him.

7. *In that he feared*: “because he held God in honour” [lit. “because of his piety”].

10. *Called*: “Named” [lit. “Addressed”].

v. 11—vi. 20. *The writer censures in his readers the low stage of their Christianity.*

## v. 11—14.

After so long a time, they are still only beginners in Christian knowledge, requiring milk, and not perfect so as to be able to bear solid food (comp. 1 Cor. ii. 6, iii. 2).

11. Read, “Whereof we should have much to say and hard to explain, since ye have become dull of hearing.”

[12. *For the time*: i.e. considering the time that has elapsed since your conversion.—*First principles*: lit. “elements of the beginning.”]

14. *Of full age*: “perfect.”—*To discern*: better, “to distinguish between.”

## vi. 1—3.

Read, “Wherefore let us now leave the beginnings of the doctrine of Christ, and go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation,” &c.

The readers are exhorted now at last to rise from the mere elements of Christian doctrine to perfection, and not to lay over again the mere foundations. Repentance from dead works is repentance from following the Jewish Law (comp. ix. 14). A believing trust in God was wanting to Judaism, notwithstanding all its belief in the One God. The doctrine of baptisms and of laying on of hands (confirmation) was the elementary teaching which was given along with baptisms, often repeated after the fashion of Essenism and the school of John (comp. Acts xviii. 25, xix. 3), and with the imparting of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands (comp. Acts viii. 17, xix. 6). The doctrine of the



resurrection of the dead and an eternal judgment would be especially likely to be forsaken by the Alexandrian Jews. But all these are the mere elements of Christianity.

vi. 4—6.

May those who have almost fallen back into Judaism consider the terrible penalty of apostasy from Christianity to Judaism, this new crucifixion of the Son of God (comp. Gal. iii. 1) of which there is no repentance.

Read, "For those who have once been enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift and been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, and have fallen away, it is impossible to renew again unto repentance, since they crucify unto themselves the Son of God, and put him to an open shame."

vi. 7—20.

The writer still hopes for the best, especially when he calls to mind the love which the Hebrews have shown by their services to the saints (vi. 10), i.e. in gifts of love to the primitive community at Jerusalem (comp. 2 Cor. viii. 4; Rom. xv. 25). Let them only hold fast their hope unto the end, and be assured of the promise which God has confirmed by an oath (Gen. xxii. 16 sq.)

7. *By whom* should be "for whose sake."

10. *Labour of love* should be simply "love."

[14. *Blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee*: a Hebraism—"I will assuredly bless thee and multiply thee."]

[16. *The greater*: i.e. that which is greater, or perhaps him who is greater, than themselves.—*And an oath*, &c., should probably be, "And of all their dispute the oath is an end for confirmation" (i.e. it finally settles the matter).]

17. *Wherein* should be "Wherefore."—*The heirs of promise*: "the heirs of the promise."—*Confirmed it* should be "mediated."

19, 20. *That within the veil* which the firm anchor of faith enters into is the Holy of Holies (Exod. xxvi. 33; Lev. xvi. 2, 12, 15) of heaven, whither Jesus has gone before, having been made an eternal high-priest after the order of Melchisedec.

vii. *The high-priesthood of Christ after the order of Melchisedec.*

This high-priesthood of Christ is worked out altogether after

the fashion of Philonic exposition of Scripture, in order to demonstrate the imperfection of the Levitical priesthood.

## vii. 2.

Melchisedec, king of Salem, the priest of the most high God, to whom Abraham gave a tithe of the booty he had taken in war (see Gen. xiv. 18—20), as being called Melchisedec, is (in Hebrew) king of righteousness; and as king of Salem he is (also in Hebrew) a king of peace.

## vii. 3.

Without father, without mother, without descent, without beginning or end of life, he stands before us, not in reality, but still in the Scripture, which is intentionally silent on all these points, and he is thus an image of the Son of God, a priest for ever (comp. ver. 8).

## vii. 4—10.

This Melchisedec is superior to Abraham, who paid him the tithe and received from him the blessing. Nay, in Abraham he even received tithe from Levi, Abraham's descendant.

## vii. 11—19.

The fact that, in Ps. cx. 4, another high-priest of the order of Melchisedec is announced, proves that the completion has not been attained through the Levitical priesthood of the order of Aaron. With the change of priesthood, a change of the Law is also announced. Christ, of whom this has been said, is of the non-priestly tribe of Judah, and is therefore a priest, not according to the law of carnal commandment, but according to the power of an indissoluble life. Hereby the old Law, which was too weak and unprofitable, has been abolished and a better hope brought in.

11. Read, "Now if the completion were by the Levitical priesthood . . . what need would there still be to say that a different priest should arise after the order of Melchisedec and not after the order of Aaron?"

[14. *Evident* = well known.]

15. *For that*: "if."

16. *Endless* should be "indissoluble."

[18, 19. Many commentators translate: "For there is indeed a disannulling of a foregoing commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness (for the Law made nothing perfect);



but there is a bringing in of a better hope, by which we draw nigh unto God." This is the sense of Luther's version also.]

## vii. 20—22.

The new priesthood was introduced by a divine oath (Ps. cx. 4), which is wanting in the case of the priesthood of the Law, so that Jesus appears as the surety of a much better divine testament (covenant).

## vii. 23—25.

The priests of the old Law are many, because they are mortal ; this one new priest is the first to have an imperishable priesthood, because he remains for ever ; wherefore he can completely save those who approach God through him.

25. *To the uttermost* : i.e. "altogether."

## vii. 26—28.

In Jesus at last we have a holy high-priest, exalted above heaven, who has not, like the high-priests of the Law, to sacrifice first for his own sins and then for those of the people, but has offered himself once for all, himself not a weak man like the others, but made perfect for ever.

27. It is an error on the part of the writer to suppose that the high-priests of the Law had to offer sacrifice daily. They were only obliged to do so once a year on the day of atonement.

28. *Which* : i.e. "the oath."—*Consecrated* : "perfect."

viii. *The high-priest in heaven.*

Special stress is laid upon the fact that the Christian high-priest sits at the right hand of God in heaven. Thus Christ is the priest of the heavenly sanctuary. The priests after the Law in the earthly sanctuary (the building of which is described according to the pattern which was shown to Moses upon the Mount, Exod. xxv. 40) serve only an image and shadow of heavenly things. Christ has attained a higher priesthood, as the mediator of a better covenant (testament), which was also ordained under better promises (viii. 6). The imperfection of the first covenant (testament) and the promise of a new covenant, a law written in the hearts, is plainly to be read in Jer. xxxi. 31—34.

4. Read, "Now if he were on earth he would not be even a priest."

5. Read, "Who serve the image and shadow of heavenly things."

6. Read, "But now he has obtained an office which is the more excellent in proportion as he is the mediator of a better testament, which has been given indeed under better promises."

ix. 1—10. *The great inferiority of the service of the earthly sanctuary in the first covenant.*

The description of the tabernacle is after Exod. xxv.—xxx. There was first the fore-tabernacle, the holy place [A.V. *sanctuary*], then behind the second veil the tabernacle, which is called the Holy of Holies. In the latter our author (ver. 4) erroneously places the golden altar of incense which stood in the holy place (Exod. xxx. 1—6, comp. xl. 26; Levit. xvi. 18). Similarly he erroneously places the golden pot of manna [Exod. xvi. 33 sq.] and Aaron's rod [Num. xvii. 10] in the ark of the covenant, which (according to 1 Kings viii. 9; 2 Chron. v. 10) contained only the tables of the Law. That the high-priest might only enter the Holy of Holies once in the year on the day of atonement to sacrifice for his own and the people's transgressions, is interpreted (vv. 8—10) to mean that the way to the holy had not yet been found so long as the first tabernacle (the fore-tabernacle) stood; that this is a figure referring to the present time, in which those who serve God cannot make their sacrifices perfect according to conscience, since they are nothing but carnal ordinances (ver. 10, comp. vii. 16) concerning meats and drinks and washings, which are imposed not for ever, but only until the time of reformation.

[3. *Holiest of all*: lit. Holy of Holies, a Hebraism for "holiest."]

4. *Censer* should be "altar of incense."

8, 9. Read, "The Holy Spirit signifying that the way to the holy had not yet been revealed so long as the fore-tabernacle stood, which is a figure for the present time in which are offered," &c.

ix. 11—28. *The superiority of Christ's priesthood.*

Christ, as high-priest of the good things to come, has passed once for all through the perfect tabernacle not made with hands, i.e. through heaven (comp. iv. 14), and not with blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, into the sanctuary, and has found an eternal redemption.



## ix. 11—14.

If in the worldly sanctuary the blood of beasts (Num. xix. 1 sqq.) sanctified unto the purification of the flesh, so much the more will the blood of Christ cleanse the consciences from dead works (of the Law) to serve the living God. The sacrifice of Christ, as distinguished from the temporary external sacrifices of the old covenant, was a moral act of sacrifice of obedience, and being offered by virtue of eternal spirit, it has also an inner and *eternal* validity.

11. *By*: "through."—*Building* should be "creation."

12. *Having obtained* should be "and obtained."

14. *Your*: "our." [The authority of the MSS. is pretty equally divided.]

## ix. 15—28.

Christ, then, is the mediator of a new covenant (testament) (comp. Matt. xxvi. 28), which has been founded through his blood, just as the first covenant was established not without blood, and as according to the Law almost everything was purified with blood (see Exod. xxiv. 3 sqq., and also the same idea in Num. xix. 1—6, and in the sprinkling of the *book* of the covenant and the tabernacle and the vessels belonging to it with blood). With such blood the types of heavenly things (in the Law) had to be purified. But the heavenly things themselves required better sacrifices. Christ entered not into the sanctuary made with hands, but into heaven itself, in order to appear for us before God. He did not offer a sacrifice repeatedly, like the high-priests of the Law, but he offered himself once for all, that he might then appear unto them that awaited him, for their salvation (comp. Col. ii. 6—17).

21. *Blood* should be "the blood."

22. *Purged*: "purified" [same word as in ver. 23].

24. *Holy places*: "holy place."—*Are the figures*: "is an antitype."

x. 1—18. *Conclusion of the exposition of the high-priesthood of Christ.*

## x. 1—4.

The Law has only a shadow (comp. Col. ii. 17) of the good things to come. Its sacrifices must be continually repeated, because they bring sins to remembrance indeed, but are unable to wipe out the consciousness of sin.

## x. 5—10.

From Ps. xl. 6—8 (following the erroneous Greek version, “a body” for “my ears”) it is concluded that Christ, at his entrance into the world, which was foretold in the book of the Old Testament, was to do away with the whole legal system of sacrifice.

8. Read, “He saith before,” &c.

## x. 11—18.

While the priests of the Law with their continual sacrifices cannot wipe out sins, Christ with the one sacrifice of his body has at once completed everything, and now sits at the right hand of God, after he has founded the new covenant of laws given in the hearts, and accomplished the forgiveness of sins.

12. Read, “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, sat down for ever on the right hand of God.”

[13. *Expecting*: i.e. “waiting.”]

15, 17. “For after that he had said before, This is the covenant, &c. . . . the Lord saith, I will put my laws,” &c.

x. 19—39. *Exhortation to steadfastness.*

Practical exhortation, with confidence in the entrance opened through the blood of Jesus and in the possession of the great high-priest over the house of God, inflexibly to hold fast to the confession of the hope.

## x. 19—22.

19. *Holiest*: “holy place” [same word as in ix. 2, 12, 24].

20. Read, “Which (entrance) he hath consecrated unto us as a new and living way through the veil, that is to say, through his flesh,” &c.

## x. 23—25.

23. *Faith*: “hope” [so all MSS.]

24. The Hebrews should provoke one another, not to works of the Law, but to love and good works.

25. Exhortation not to forsake the gathering together of the Christian community, as some of them were already beginning to do, since the day of the return of Christ is approaching (comp. ver. 37).

## x. 26—31.

The terrible punishment for deliberate apostasy, for which there is no atonement. The penalty for the rejection of the



Mosaic Law was death (Deut. xvii. 2—7). Much greater will be the punishment of him who has trodden under foot the Son of God, counted the blood of the covenant (testament), wherewith he was sanctified, common (profane), and treated despitefully the Christian spirit, a spirit of grace in opposition to the religion of the Law.

[28. Read, "He that hath transgressed the Law of Moses dieth without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses."]

30. Read, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." From Deut. xxxii. 35, with the same departure from the original and the Greek version as in Rom. xii. 19. [Some MSS. omit "saith the Lord," which may have been added here from Rom.]

#### x. 32—34.

The Hebrews, already wavering in their Christian confession, are reminded of the first period of their enlightenment or conversion to Christianity. At that time they endured a great fight of sufferings, partly by being themselves made a gazing-stock with reproaches and afflictions, partly by having become companions of those who so lived, viz. the oppressed Christian brethren in the faith. For they suffered with those who were in bonds (not with "me in my bonds," as some early MSS. have it), and bore the spoiling of their goods joyfully.—All this agrees with the persecution of the Jews in Alexandria under the emperor Caius Caligula (38—41), which Philo describes. This persecution of the Alexandrian Jews would no doubt also fall upon the young Jewish-Christian community.

34. Read, "For ye had compassion on those in bonds, and took with joy the spoiling of your possessions, knowing that ye have a better and enduring possession for yourselves in heaven." [Some of the best MSS. omit "in heaven."]

#### x. 35—39.

The Hebrews still require patience, in order that they may receive the promise through the fulfilment of the Divine will.

37. The return of Christ is to be expected to come soon.

38. From Hab. ii. 3, 4 (here quoted more fully than in Rom. i. 17), let them learn that cowardly retreat leads to destruction, but faith leads to the deliverance of the soul.—*The just* should be "my just man."

xi. *The writer's own peculiar conception of the fundamental principle of Paulinism.*

The writer desires not only to keep the Hebrews to the Christian faith generally, but also to win them to a Christianity free from the Law.

xi. 1—3.

Faith is not here, as with Paul, confined to the acknowledgment of Jesus as the promised Son of God, but, from the first, is understood more generally as confidence in that which is hoped for, an unhesitating assurance of the invisible.

1. Read, "But faith is an undoubting conviction of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen."

2. *The elders*: "the ancients."

3. From the definition of faith in ver. 1, it follows that the subject of faith is God, His creation of the world, and the recompense which He gives (ver. 6).—*The things which are seen were not* should be "that which is visible was not."

xi. 4—7.

The series of witnesses to the faith does not begin, as in Paul (Rom. iv. 11), with Abraham, the ancestor of righteousness by faith, but as far back as Abel, who after his death still speaketh (comp. xii. 24; Gen. iv. 10), Enoch, Noah, who were all heirs of the righteousness which is of faith.

7. [*Fear*: rather, "piety."—*By the which* refers to his faith.] *Which is by faith* should be "according to faith."

xi. 8—10.

Abraham's saving faith is no longer confined, as Paul has it, simply to the promise given to him and his seed, but is extended to a heavenly Jerusalem (comp. Gal. iv. 26), and the firmly-founded city of the supernatural world (comp. Heb. xi. 14, 16).

xi. 11, 12.

That which Paul describes as the justifying faith of Abraham (Rom. iv. 18 sqq.), is here transferred to Sarah, viz. faith in the promise in spite of its inconsistency with what might naturally be expected.

11. Read, "By faith, Sarah herself received strength to found a seed [i.e. a family], even contrary to her time of life" (lit. "the time of her age").



## xi. 13—16.

General remarks upon the faith of the patriarchs, who felt that they were strangers upon earth and sought a heavenly fatherland.

13. Read, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and greeted them, and confessed that they were strangers and aliens on the earth."

## xi. 17—19.

The sacrifice of Isaac (Gen xxii. 1 sqq.) is adduced as a special proof of Abraham's faith, which is shown by his confidence in God's power to raise from the dead; wherefore, figuratively speaking, Abraham received his only son back again. As the fore part of the tabernacle is a figure of the present age (ix. 9), so this receiving of Isaac, who was offered as a sacrifice, is a figure of the resurrection of the Redeemer from his sacrificial death.

## xi. 20—22.

21. *And worshipped*, &c., should be "and worshipped towards the top of his staff."—The writer here follows the incorrect Greek version of Gen. xlvii. 31, which speaks of the staff instead of the bed.

## xi. 23—29.

23. See Exod. i. 22, ii. 1, 2.—*Proper*: "fair" [the same word that is rendered "fair" in Acts vii. 20].

26. A far-reaching extension of the idea of prefigurations of Christianity in the Old Testament. Moses, in surrendering the treasures of Egypt with a view to a heavenly recompense, is said already to have borne (typically) the reproach of Christ.—[*Had respect unto*: i.e. "looked to."]

27. His faith is said to have prevented him from fearing the wrath of the king when he left Egypt (Exod ii. 15).—*Endured* should be "was strong" or "steadfast."

## xi. 31.

The writer boldly ventures to reckon even the harlot Rahab as a heroine of faith because of her friendly reception of the spies.

## xi. 33—38.

33. *Stopped the mouths of lions*: see Judges xiv. 16; 1 Sam. xvii. 34 sqq.; Dan. vi. 22; 1 Macc. ii. 60; [Ecclus. xlvi. 3].

35. *Women received their dead raised to life again* (lit. "by resurrection"): see 1 Kings xvii. 17 sqq.; 2 Kings iv. 18 sqq.—"But others were tortured:" see 2 Macc. vi. 18 sqq., vii. 1 sqq. Those who were tortured despised outward deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

37, 38. *They were stoned*: see 2 Chron. xxiv. 20—22.—*Sawn asunder*: According to an ancient tradition, which is probably referred to here, the prophet Isaiah is said to have been sawn asunder by command of the Jewish king Manasseh.—*Slain with the sword*: see 1 Kings xix. 10, 14; [Jer. ii. 30, xxvi. 23]; Zech. xiii. 7.—[*Tempted*: This appears strange in the middle of a list of violent deaths. "Burnt" or "pierced" has been suggested, either of which words in Greek would differ very slightly from the word which stands in the text meaning "tempted."]—*They wandered about, &c.*: see 1 Kings xviii. 4, 13, xix. 4, 8 sqq.; 1 Macc. ii. 28, 29; 2 Macc. v. 27, vi. 11, x. 1.

xi. 39, 40.

The fulfilment of the promise, which the earlier age did not see, has been reserved for the Christians.

xii. *Continuation of the exhortation to righteousness by faith, which has been interrupted by the cloud of witnesses in the preceding chapter.*

xii. 1—3.

Laying aside every impediment, they are to prepare themselves for the race that is set before them (comp. 1 Cor. ix. 24), and at the same time to look to the beginner and completer of their faith, Jesus, who by his death upon the cross has attained to the right hand of God. Let them consider what contradiction he had to endure from sinners, as the Jews are here called (comp. Heb. vii. 26), not the Gentiles (Wisd. x. 20; Matt. ix. 10, xi. 19, xxvi. 45, comp. Luke xviii. 32; Gal. ii. 15), in order that their courage may not fail.

1. "Wherefore let us also, seeing that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside," &c.

2. *Author*: "beginner." [The same word that is translated "captain" in ii. 10, and "prince" in Acts iii. 15, v. 31.]

xii. 4—11.

The Hebrews, in resisting sin (on the part of the Jews), have



not yet come to the shedding of blood, i.e. they have not yet suffered any bloody persecution. And yet in the struggle they have already forgotten the scriptural saying (Prov. iii. 11 sq.), that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Only bastards, and not children, are without chastisement. To the Father of spirits, as God is called in ver. 9 (comp. Num. xvi. 22, xxvii. 16), let them submit even in chastisement, for this finally produces the peaceful fruit of righteousness, i.e. the fruit of peace which consists in righteousness.

xii. 12—17.

Let us, then, in the contest lift up the hands that hang down and the feeble knees, and take care not to stumble. Especially the Hebrews are admonished to let no root of bitterness spring up among them (after a corrupt reading of the Greek version of Deut. xxix. 18) whereby the multitude would be defiled. What is probably meant is apostasy from Christianity to Judaism, as is shown by the warning that follows, that no one, like Esau, sell his (Christian) birthright for meat. After this no repentance was possible to Esau (comp. Gen. xxvii. 34 sqq.), just as the author of our Epistle has already said there is no repentance for apostasy from Christianity (vi. 4—6).

14. *Holiness*: "sanctification" [so lit.].

xii. 18—29. *Warning against apostasy.*

From these verses it is evident that the writer is concerned with the question of apostasy from Christianity to Judaism.

xii. 18—21.

They have not come, as when the Law was given on Sinai, to a tangible mountain which burnt with fire (see Exod. xix. 18; Deut. iv. 11, v. 23, ix. 15), to gloom and darkness and tempest (see Deut. iv. 11, v. 22), to the sound of a trumpet (see Exod. xix. 16, 19, xx. 18) and a voice of words (i.e. the words of God in the giving of the Ten Commandments, Exod. xx.; Deut. v.), the hearers of which prayed that no more might be spoken to them (see Exod. xx. 18, 19; Deut. v. 25, xviii. 16). For they did not bear the commandment (Exod. xix. 12, 13) that even a beast which touched the mountain must be stoned. Moses himself spoke with fear of the terrible sight (see Deut. ix. 19).

19. Read, "And to the sound of a trumpet, and to a voice of

words, the hearers of which begged that no more might be said unto them."

[20. *Could not endure*: lit. "did not bear."]

xii. 22—24.

They have come, rather, to Mount Sion (frequently spoken of in the Old Testament as the dwelling-place of God and the place of future salvation; see Ps. xlviii. 3, l. 2; Is. ii. 2, 3; Mic. iv. 1, 2, &c.), to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem (comp. Gal. iv. 26), to many thousands of angels (the retinue of God), to the community of the first-born, gathered together to the festival, who are written in heaven, i.e. to those righteous ones who were enumerated in ch. xi. who are not yet in heaven, but whose names are written there (comp. Luke x. 20; Phil. iv. 3). They have come to God himself, the Judge of all, to the spirits of perfected just men (i.e., probably, the Christians who had already fallen asleep), to the mediator of the new covenant, Jesus, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel (comp. xi. 4).

22. *An innumerable company*: lit. "tens of thousands."

23. *General* should be "festival."

xii. 25—29.

They must therefore see that they do not reject him that speaketh from heaven, whose voice shook the earth (see Exod. xix. 18; Judges v. 4 sq.; Ps. lxxviii. 8, cxiv. 7), who hath promised to shake once more heaven and earth (Hagg. ii. 6). This "once more" the writer takes to signify an impending change of the whole creation, in order that that which is unshaken may remain. With the prospect of a kingdom that cannot be shaken, they must therefore serve God in thankfulness, but at the same time with fear before him as a consuming fire (Deut. iv. 24).

27. *Removing*: "changing."

28. *Let us have grace* should be "let us cherish gratitude."

xiii. *Special exhortations added to the great exhortation to stand fast in the Christian confession.*

xiii. 1—3.

Exhortation to brotherly love, to hospitality, whereby some (e.g. Abraham and Lot, Gen. xviii. xix) have entertained angels, and to sympathy with prisoners and those who are in adversity.



## xiii. 4.

Marriage must be kept thoroughly in honour.—Read, “Let marriage be held in honour among all,” &c.

## xiii. 5, 6.

5. The writer quotes Deut. xxxi. 6 (comp. 1 Chron. xxviii. 20 ; Josh. i. 5) with the same variation with which the Alexandrian Jew, Philo, quotes it in one of his writings.—[*Conversation*: i.e. “conduct.”—*Never*: better, “in no wise.”]

6. *The Lord*, &c.: “The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear. What shall man do unto me?” [So the best editors divide the verse.]

## xiii. 7.

Exhortation to remember the teachers who have died, whose faith should be imitated.—*Them that have rule over you*: “your teachers” [lit. “your leaders”].—[*Conversation*: i.e. manner of life.]

## xiii. 8, 9.

8. [This verse should not be connected with “end” in the preceding verse, but is a separate sentence: “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever.”]—To this mention of Jesus Christ as the same yesterday and to-day and for ever, the writer attaches a warning against diverse doctrines alien to Christianity, dealing with the unprofitable externality of meats and with sacrifices, that is to say, a warning against doctrines of Judaism.

## xiii. 10—12.

The readers are assured that they have an altar of which those who serve the tabernacle may not eat. For, as the beasts sacrificed by the high-priest (on the day of atonement) were burned without the camp (Lev. xvi. 27), so Jesus, in order that he might by his own blood sanctify the people (of them that believe), suffered without the gate (Matt. xxvii. 32).

## xiii. 13—16.

Therefore the Christian Hebrews are required to go forth to him without the Jewish camp, bearing his reproach, i.e. to break off entirely from the Jewish religious communion. We have here (upon earth) no abiding city (the earthly Jerusalem, the existence of which is still evidently assumed), but seek one which is to come (comp. xi. 10, 13 sqq.). Therefore let the sacrifice of praise be offered to God at all times through Christ—not from

time to time through the Levitical priests—sacrifices of praise and of beneficence.

[15. *Giving thanks*: i.e. our lips which give thanks.]

[16. *Communicate*: i.e. “share.”]

xiii. 17.

17. Further exhortation to obey the teachers or rulers [A.V. “them that have the rule over you;” lit. “your leaders”], who were probably not of Hebrew blood.

xiii. 18, 19.

Intercession for the writer himself, especially that he may come very soon to the readers again.

[18. *Willing to live honestly*: better, “desiring to live honourably,” or “in a seemly manner.”]

19. *The rather*: “more abundantly.”

xiii. 20, 21.

The writer, in conclusion, wishes his Hebrew readers all practical help from the God of peace, who hath raised the great Shepherd of the sheep from the dead (comp. 1 Thess. v. 23).

20. This reference to the resurrection of Christ is the only one in the Epistle.

xiii. 22.

May the readers hear the hortatory address.

xiii. 23.

Timothy has been set free from his bonds again, i.e. from the imprisonment into which he seems to have been brought as travelling companion to Paul (comp. Phil. i. 1, ii. 19). The writer hopes, with him, to see the readers, if he shall come soon.

xiii. 24, 25.

The greeting which is sent to all the rulers or teachers of the Hebrews and to all the saints, i.e. the remaining members of the community, shows us that these Hebrews only formed a part of a larger Christian community. But the greeting which the writer sends from the brethren from Italy, places us in the time immediately following the Neronian persecution of the Christians, which must have driven many Christians out of Italy.—The greetings of these confessors of Christianity had special weight.

[24. *Them that have the rule over you*: see note on ver. 17.—*They of Italy*: strictly, “they out of Italy.”]



## THE EPISTLE OF JAMES.

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A CONSIDERABLE period elapsed before the Epistle which we now possess under the name of James met with distinct acceptance in the collection of New-Testament writings. It was known, indeed, in the Eastern Church as early as the middle of the second century. Though there was an inclination there to acknowledge it as a work of apostolic origin and to incorporate it in the New Testament, still there were serious objections to it, which were probably the cause of the delay in its general acceptance. It was not until the beginning of the second half of the fourth century that the Eastern Church decided formally in favour of its acceptance among the New-Testament writings. In the Western Church, where for a long time it had been but little regarded, it was not until the end of the same century that a secure place was assigned to it among the other Epistles of the New Testament.

From this time the doubts which this Epistle had given rise to in the Christian church were laid to rest until they awoke again in the age of the Reformation. Luther's strong objection to it is well known. In the year 1522, in his Introduction to it, he denies its apostolic origin, saying: "Methinks it must have been some good pious man that took some sayings of the disciples of the apostles and put them down on paper, or perhaps it was written by another from his preaching." In his Introduction to the New Testament, written in the same year, he speaks of it in the well-known contemptuous terms that have already been quoted in our General Introduction (Vol. I. p. 23). To this severe sentence upon the Epistle of James, Luther always adhered,

and it is evident from his later declarations that the ground of his special objection to the Epistle was the impossibility of reconciling its doctrine of faith and justification with the Pauline doctrine.

In accordance with the spirit that afterwards penetrated the Protestant Church in Germany, the unfavourable opinion of the Epistle which Luther expressed was gradually abandoned; but, on the other hand, in recent times the revival of thorough and independent scriptural research has given rise to new objections. The chief source of these objections is the attack upon the Pauline doctrine of faith and justification which is made in the second chapter (ii. 14—26). There were many, indeed, who thought they might silence their doubts about this passage by supposing that what was attacked was not so much the doctrine of the apostle Paul himself as the misuse that was early made of it; that fundamentally Paul and James agreed entirely in regarding faith as the necessary condition of justification and reconciliation, and works as the natural fruit of faith and therefore necessary to salvation; that James's zeal was only directed against those whose crass misunderstanding of this doctrine had allowed them to be betrayed into the foolish idea that a dead faith, productive of no results, was itself sufficient to justify before God, whereas really justification and eternal salvation could only be imparted by God to him in whom faith proved fruitful in good works.

This view, however, of the attitude of the author of our Epistle towards the doctrine of the apostle Paul was based upon an error. New and thorough investigation has shown that whoever wrote it not only attacked the misunderstanding and misuse of this doctrine, but disapproved of the doctrine itself, and that altogether his view of Christianity and its relation to the Law of the Old Testament was very different from that which was held by the great Apostle to the Gentiles.

His position was, on the whole, the Jewish-Christian position. Hence he altogether rejected Paul's great principle that by the



foundation of a new order of salvation which Christ had accomplished, and especially by the death which he endured, the Law, which had never been intended to be more than temporary, had been abolished, and that Christians therefore, whether they had previously been Jews or Gentiles, were no longer bound to observe it. That the abolition of the Law was the condition on which alone Christianity could be developed into the universal religion which it was destined to become, was an idea that he had never entertained. To him, on the contrary, Christianity itself was also *law*, only he saw in it the *completion of the Law* (i. 25), without in any way inferring from this that the Christians, including even those who were of Jewish origin, were free from its dominion. If he also considered that the highest moral principle of Christianity was the commandment of love (ii. 8), he explained this, not on the supposition that Christianity was something quite different from the Law, but only that it was the Law itself in its highest development. It was to him a law of liberty (i. 25), not because it removed from its confessors the oppressive yoke of Jewish ceremonial service, but rather because it loosened for them the fetters which had hitherto restricted their moral liberty, and placed them in the happy state in which they fulfilled of free inner impulse all that the Law prescribed. Like Paul, he also ascribed to Christianity, as the word of truth, the power of transforming man and making him a new man (i. 18). But the new life thus produced in the confessors of Christianity is expressed, in accordance with his views, not in the faith-abounding spiritual union with Christ, on which Paul everywhere laid such stress (and which was to him the condition of the attainment of all the blessings obtained by the death of Christ, and, above all, the condition of the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God, Gal. ii. 20), but in the fact that the confessor of Jesus, in virtue of the love that fills him, applies all his powers to the perfecting of *works* of beneficence. It is one of the results of this view that the writer attaches throughout his Epistle the utmost importance to *works*, whereas Paul, on the other hand,

always places the inner living *faith* in Christ in the foreground. The writer's whole attitude towards Christ is altogether different from that of the apostle Paul. The latter always starts from Christ, and refers to him all the instruction, the exhortations and admonitions, the threats and consolations, to which he gives utterance. In the Epistle of James, Christ is strikingly in the background. Though he is spoken of as the Lord of glory (ii. 1), yet he is seldom mentioned; and his death on the cross and his resurrection are never mentioned at all. If we try to picture to ourselves a man of this tendency, and with these views of Christianity and its relation to the Law, we shall easily understand that he could not look with favour upon the Pauline doctrine of justification, and that he would inevitably be all the more prejudiced against it if he had met with examples of men who erroneously took it to mean that nothing further was required for the attainment of forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation than that one should believe in Christ as the promised deliverer, and in his death as a vicarious sacrifice for the reconciliation of men with God. If, as his Epistle seems to indicate, he had read some of Paul's Epistles, those, at least, to the Galatians and the Romans, still he had failed to penetrate into the whole truth and depth of the Pauline doctrine of faith and justification. He agreed with the apostle Paul that faith was a condition of justification and eternal salvation. But his conception of faith was altogether different from Paul's. While Paul understood by faith a complete spiritual communion with the Redeemer through the deepest conviction of the divine honour of Jesus and his bloody death of reconciliation—an absorption of the entire spiritual life in him, so that the Christian was in Christ and Christ in him (Gal. ii. 19, 20; 2 Cor. v. 15; Rom. xiv. 8, 9)—to the writer of our Epistle faith was rather a fact of the *thinking* mind, a conviction of the existence of the one only God (ii. 19), and of the Messianic office and heavenly glorification of Christ (ii. 1). Setting out from this conception of faith, it was impossible for him to ascribe to it the same influence as Paul. To the latter, faith



was the source of an entirely new holy life in Christ, and of enthusiastic love to God and man. Our author, on the other hand, regarded faith as something that is still to be made perfect, and that finds this required perfection in the love that is due to other causes, and the good works produced by this love. In his view, good works are not the natural product of faith (as in Gal. v. 6), but they are an external addition to faith which unites with it. Having this idea of faith, our author naturally could not accept Paul's doctrine that forgiveness of sins and justification are bestowed upon man for his faith's sake alone (Rom. iii. 28; Gal. ii. 16). In his opinion, good works are also required for justification, while according to the Pauline doctrine they can only spring from the joyful consciousness of the entirely new relation to God that has been already attained through justification.

That a writing standing in a position of antagonism to Paul's views of Christianity and his doctrine of justifying faith, like that in the consideration of which we are now engaged, could be produced during the apostolic age, will not be a matter of surprise to any one who is acquainted with the circumstances of the Christian church at that period as revealed to us in the New Testament itself. The Book of Acts and the Epistles of the apostle Paul, especially the Epistles to the Galatians and the Corinthians, bear witness that the Christians of Jewish origin, and especially those belonging to the community at Jerusalem, could not understand his system of ideas, that they met him with hostile feelings, and that there were some among them who endeavoured to throw suspicion upon him in the communities which he had himself founded, and to obstruct his apostolic labours. The circumstance that those who thus acted loved to appeal to Peter and James (Gal. ii. 12; 1 Cor. i. 12), leads us to suppose that even they were not satisfied with Paul, that they disapproved of his principle of the abolition of the Law, and regarded his doctrine of justification by faith as erroneous and dangerous.

This disagreement between Paul and these two apostles, favoured the opinion which was early current in the church, that the Epistle before us was the work of James. But since there are several men of this name who appear in the New Testament, it still remains to inquire which of them may be regarded as the probable author of this Epistle. It was not the apostle James, son of Zebedee and brother of John; for he was beheaded in the year 44 in Jerusalem, by command of king Herod Agrippa (Acts xii. 1, 2). Nor was it indeed this James whom ecclesiastical legend made the author of our Epistle, but one who did not belong strictly to the company of the apostles, one whom we early meet with, however, as an influential member of the Christian community at Jerusalem, and held in high esteem there, who plays a prominent part in the assembly of apostles and elders described in the fifteenth chapter of the Book of Acts, with whom Paul had several interviews there (Gal. i. 19, ii. 9), who, as Paul expresses it, was regarded, together with Peter and John, as a pillar of the church (Gal. ii. 9), and whom Paul even speaks of as an apostle (Gal. i. 19). This James was for a number of years president of the Christian community in Jerusalem, until, as the Jewish historian Josephus informs us, he suffered a martyr's death in the year 62 at the instigation of the then high-priest Ananus.

Josephus calls this James a *brother of Jesus*, and Paul also speaks of him in the same way (Gal. i. 19). The simplest explanation of this is that he was actually a brother of the Lord. And indeed among the brothers of Christ mentioned in the Gospels we find one named James (Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3). The opinion has very frequently been expressed that he was not, properly speaking, a brother of Jesus, but is only loosely spoken of as such, and was really a cousin; that, in fact, he was one and the same person with James, the son of Alphæus, whom we find among the apostles, who was related to Jesus as the son of his mother's sister (John xix. 25; comp. Mark xv. 40). This is not the place to discuss this opinion, especially as it rests



upon assumptions to which there are important linguistic objections.

We are therefore fully justified in regarding the revered president of the community at Jerusalem as an actual brother of the Lord. We might be surprised, indeed, to find this James among the enthusiastic adherents of Jesus, inasmuch as his brothers did not believe in him (John vii. 5). It appears, however, that after the crucifixion a great change took place in them. A short time after Jesus disappeared from the earth, we find his brothers among the believers (Acts i. 14). Was it, perhaps, the resurrection of Jesus that produced this change of tone in them, and was the James of whom Paul tells us that the Lord had appeared to him (1 Cor. xv. 7), and whom he appears to distinguish from the apostles, the very man of whom we are speaking?

To him, then, the Christian church early ascribed the Epistle which is still extant in the New Testament under his name. In favour of this opinion some arguments may be adduced, the importance of which cannot be doubted. It agrees with the known ideas of James, and with the relation in which he stood to Paul. It is confirmed by the circumstance that the writer of the Epistle does not reckon himself one of the apostles, but calls himself a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ (i. 1). If what is stated by ancient Christian writers be correct, that the surname of the "righteous" was given to him, and that he was distinguished for the strictness of his life, this would explain the great emphasis which he lays upon the performance of good works. [This surname is commonly rendered "the just" in English, from the Latin "justus," but the word is the same in Greek that is better rendered "righteous."]

The hypothesis that this James was the author of our Epistle is further supported by the indications which we find in the Epistle itself of the date of its composition. There is no mention of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Christianity, however, has already spread beyond the limits of Palestine (i. 1). The believers have been subject to divers trials (i. 2), and it

would seem as if all had not remained steadfast under them (i. 13 sq.). The writer is painfully moved by the moral delinquencies which have crept in among the Christians, especially the oppression which the poorer and humbler brethren suffer at the hands of the rich and those of higher rank (v. 1 sqq.). He blames also the vain desire to put oneself forward as a teacher in the Christian gatherings (iii. 1). Everything appears to him to indicate a complete revolution of all things, which he expects will be brought about by the re-appearance of the Lord in all his glory (v. 7, 9).

But if these arguments may be adduced in favour of the theory that the James who has been supposed by the church to have written the Epistle really was the author of it, we must not omit to mention, on the other hand, that there are certain difficulties in the way of this supposition which readily explain the opposition to it which has been raised by a considerable number of very distinguished theologians of our own day. Grave suspicions are at once aroused by the fact that the Epistle is not distinctly mentioned as a work of James until the third century, and that famous early Christian teachers express themselves doubtful about this authorship, or even expressly deny that it is his. It is further remarkable that the writer calls himself a *servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ* (i. 1), and not *brother of the Lord*, as he was early called (Gal. i. 9). Attention has also fairly been drawn to the dependent relation in which the Epistle appears to stand to several of the New-Testament writings, especially some of the Epistles of the apostle Paul. It may further be urged that it is not easy to explain how James, considering the circumstances of his life which are known to us, could have attained such skill in Greek style as the writer of the Epistle displays. Hence, however well supported the opinion that this Epistle was written by James, the well-known head of the community at Jerusalem, it cannot after all be regarded as certain. The true origin of the Epistle remains doubtful.

Whoever the writer may have been, he follows no strict



arrangement in his composition, but gives himself up to the natural flow of his thoughts, and sometimes passes rapidly from one subject to another. His language is vivid, forcible, and sometimes rises almost to poetic flights. His skill in the manipulation of the Greek language distinguishes him in a remarkable manner from almost all the other writers of the New Testament, at the same time that it cannot but force upon us the question raised above, how he attained it.

## THE EPISTLE OF JAMES.

### i.

*Exhortation to steadfastness amid trials, and to prayer for wisdom.*

*The poor and the rich are admonished. Instruction regarding temptations. Exhortation to practical religion.*

1. *The twelve tribes*: the usual phrase for the Jewish nation (Matt. xix. 28, &c.). What James means is the Israelites who have come over to Christianity, or more accurately, as appears from the words *which are scattered abroad* (lit. "in the dispersion"), converts to Christianity from among the Israelites dwelling out of Palestine. From the point of view of his own doctrine, he saw the proper nucleus of the Christian church only in the Jewish Christians. The Gentile Christians appeared to him to stand in somewhat the same relation to the church in which the proselytes stood to the Jewish people.

2. It is evident from the context that what is here meant is persecutions that are suffered for the faith's sake.—*Fall* should be "have fallen."

3. *Patience* should be "steadfastness."

4. Read, "But let steadfastness be perfect unto the end [lit. "have a complete work"], that ye may be perfect and blameless, and nothing may be wanting to you."

5. What is spoken of here is that moral *wisdom*, which is a necessary condition of moral goodness.

9—12. It is quite clear from ver. 12 that the sayings contained in these verses are connected with the exhortation to a steadfast endurance of trials in ver. 2. Poor and rich alike must endure steadfastly in times of religious persecution; the former supported by the prospect of the glorious exaltation promised them in the kingdom to be established by Christ at his second coming; the latter in the consciousness that wealth after all is perishable, and all earthly glory must end in the dissolution which will take place with the return of Christ.—*Let the brother,*



&c.: "But let the brother who is low glory in his exaltation" [so lit.]. Lowliness here includes poverty.—The *rich* (and high) will perish, as such, i.e. will cease to be rich and high, he will lose his earthly happiness and his honour before the world.—*Endureth*: i.e. passes through without yielding.—*Temptation*: "trial."—*When he is tried*: "when he has been proved."

13—15. God tempts man, not for the purpose of driving him to apostasy and sin, but rather to give him an opportunity of proving his faith. He who succumbs to temptation has only himself to complain of that he has not opposed the necessary resistance to the evil lusts and desires awakened by the temptation.

15. *Finished*: "completed."—*Death*: This word signifies here, as often in the New Testament, all the physical and spiritual misery which arises from sin.

16 sqq. So far from its being possible that God should compel any one to evil, He is the source of every good that man enjoys.

17. *Father of lights* [lit. Father of the lights] should be "Cause of the heavenly lights."—*Shadow of turning* [so lit., the meaning probably being shadow caused by turning]: "alternation of day and night."

18. Conclusion from what has preceded.—*Begat*: of course in the spiritual sense.—*First fruits of his creatures*: What the first Christians were made by the second birth, brought about by the help of God, all succeeding Christians should be, viz. new creatures made holy.

19. *Wherefore*: i.e. because as Christians we have been begotten anew by God.—[Some of the best MSS. read, "Ye know, my beloved brethren; but let every man," &c.]

21. *Superfluity of naughtiness*: i.e. that wickedness which is so abundant.—*Engrafted*: "implanted."

22. *Deceiving your own selves*: imagining that the mere hearing of the word is itself sufficient for salvation.

23, 24. The *word* of truth makes us aware of our moral imperfection and excites us to improvement. Unfortunately, many soon forget again what they had recognized for a moment in the light of the gospel.

25. Read, "But whoso hath looked into the perfect law of liberty, and continued therein."—It is evident that by *the perfect*

*law of liberty* the writer means nothing else than the word of truth, the gospel; but what particular attribute of it leads him to call it the law of liberty is not quite certain. Probably it is because it leads men to do from a free inner impulse that which it prescribes.

26. *Seem to be*: "think himself."—In this verse the writer already has in his mind the fault, which appeared, seemingly, in his time in many forms, of the misuse of the tongue both in unbidden teaching and also in the utterance of angry speeches.

[26, 27. *Religion*: The word here used denotes rather a religious act, "divine service" as we should call it, than religion generally.—*God and the Father*: better, "the God and Father," or "our God and Father."]

## ii.

*Warning against party spirit, and against an inactive faith.*

2. We may be quite sure that the writer here has in his mind actual cases which had come under his own observation, and which had roused his indignation all the more because he was already somewhat prejudiced against the rich.—[*Goodly* . . . *vile*: more exactly, "brilliant" . . . "dirty."]

4. Read, "Have ye not then become at variance with yourselves, and judged according to bad principles?"—The believing Christian must surely know that material wealth gives a man no real worth, and that in Christ rich and poor are one.

5. Read, "Hath not God chosen those who are poor in the estimation of this world to be rich in regard to faith," &c.

6. *Despised*: "dishonoured."—It is clear from v. 4 sqq. that there were rich Christians who behaved in a most reprehensible manner towards the poorer brethren. It need scarcely be said, however, that the reproaches here made by James against rich men generally could not strictly apply to them all.

7. "The good [A.V. *worthy*, lit. "beautiful"] name" is here undoubtedly the name of Christ, after whom the confessors of the gospel had first been called Christians in Antioch (comp. 1 Pet. iv. 14).

8. *The royal law*: the highest and most excellent; as Jesus himself had declared it to be (Matt. xxii. 39).—*According to the Scripture*: Lev. xix. 18.



10. The transgression of each individual law testifies to a want of due respect for the whole Law.

13. *Rejoiceth against judgment* should be "awaiteth judgment with joyful confidence" [lit. "boasteth of judgment," or, as some take it, "triumpheth over judgment"].

18. It might seem here as if an objection was raised to James's view. But the speaker who is introduced is really on his side, and from his position is attacking the Pauline doctrine of faith.

19. *Devils* should be "evil spirits."

21. The case of Abraham is introduced in the Epistle to the Romans (iv. 15) for an exactly opposite purpose.

25. The case of Rahab also is adduced in the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 31) in favour of the doctrine of justification by faith.

### iii.

*Warning against forwardness in teaching and the abuse of the tongue. The necessity of true wisdom.*

1. The writer takes up again what he has previously said (i. 19). It must be remembered that in his days teaching in the Christian assemblies was not attached to any special office, but was open to any one.—Read, "My brethren, be not many teachers, and consider that we (the teachers) shall be subject to a more severe judgment."

2. [Lit. "For we all stumble in many things. If any man stumble not in word," &c.]—*In word*: i.e. in his speech generally. The easier it is for a man to trip in his speech, the more strongly does the wise control of the tongue tell in favour of a man's self-control and moral conduct generally.

5. *How great a matter*: "what a forest."—[The Greek word sometimes employed to denote material (*matter*) generally, means in the strict sense "wood."]

6. *Course of nature* should be "wheel of our life."

13. *Conversation*: "conduct."

17. *Intreated*: "persuaded."

18. Those who teach and live in the spirit of peaceful wisdom have an improving and soothing influence upon others.

## iv.

*Warning against contentiousness. Exhortation to humility and prohibition of unloving judgments. Indication of the common source of all these sins, viz. the dominion of desire.*

1. *Lusts* should be “desires” [or more lit. “pleasures”].

2. *Desire to have*: “envy.”

3. *Consume it upon your lusts*: better, “waste it in your pleasures.”

4. The Hebrews, who conceived of the relation of their nation to God as a marriage, regarded all who were unfaithful to God as adulterous. The particular faithlessness toward God which the writer here had in his mind, consisted in an extravagant love of the world.

5. *The spirit*, &c., should be “The spirit that dwelleth in us longeth jealously:” i.e. longeth for God, and this longing excludes the love of the world.—What passage of Scripture the writer has in his mind is uncertain, perhaps Deut. vi. 5.

6. Read, “Yea, it (i.e. the spirit) giveth greater grace, wherefore it (i.e. the Scripture) saith,” &c.—The spirit giveth greater grace, i.e. he who is restrained from the love of the world by the spirit of God, which quickens him, obtains thereby an incomparably greater blessing than the world can give.—The passage quoted is from Prov. iii. 34, and is also cited 1 Pet. v. 5. The proud, mentioned here, are such as are puffed up with foolish pride on account of worldly possessions and honour. The humble are those who strive after God only, and attach no value to worldly things.

8. *Purify* should be “sanctify.”

9. True repentance is necessarily united with inner tribulation (2 Cor. vii. 10).

11, 12. The law is here the Christian law, which makes love the fundamental commandment. Evil-speaking and inconsiderate judgment of others, is a serious transgression of this law; and, at the same time, judgment and condemnation of others is an unwarranted interference in that which is the prerogative of the law.

13. Those who are addressed in the section of the Epistle extending from here to v. 6, are the same his aversion to whom the writer has already several times signified, pretended Chris-



tians who were lost in worldliness, and had become haughty and overbearing, and involved themselves in the guilt of serious injustice to the poorer and humbler brethren. Looking to the return of the Lord, which was believed to be at hand, James proclaims to them a heavy sentence.—*And continue, &c.*, should be “and spend a year there and trade,” &c.

[15. Read, “Instead of saying,” &c., ver. 14 being a parenthesis, and ver. 13 being taken up again here.]

17. A general expression of a deep truth, applied here, however, especially to the persons addressed in this passage, who as Christians ought to learn the impropriety of their overbearing disposition and the sacred duty of humility.

#### V.

*Warning to unjust rich men. Exhortation to patience. Prohibition of oaths. Recommendation of Christian intercession.*

2. In prophetic style, that which is regarded as immediately and with certainty impending is spoken of as already accomplished.

3. The destruction of your wealth shall be the announcement of your own destruction.—[*For the last days*: lit. “in the last days.”]

4. *Kept back by fraud* should be “withheld.”—The offence here alluded to was strictly forbidden in the Old Testament (Lev. xix. 13; Jer. xxii. 13).

5. *A day of slaughter*: i.e. a day when a beast has been slaughtered for the house.

7. *Until he receive* should be “until it receive.”—*The early and the latter rain* = the autumnal and spring rains.

8. *Draweth nigh*: “is nigh.” Lit. “has drawn nigh.”

9. *Grudge not*: “sigh not.” The meaning is, do not secretly pray for one another’s punishment, lest you be condemned for such an expression of vengeance.

11. Read, “Behold we count them blessed which endure steadfastly. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and the end which the Lord brought about. See that He is compassionate and merciful.”—*The end*: the blessed termination of the sufferings of Job.

12. *Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay*: i.e. abide by your simple yes or no.—The circumstance that the writer only quotes

here such forms of oath as were not held to be binding among the Jews (by the heaven and by the earth), has led some to the conclusion that he did not forbid swearing by God, which is expressly allowed by the Mosaic Law (Lev. xix. 12; Deut. vi. 13). But this is contradicted by the words which immediately follow, which seem to contain an unconditional prohibition of oaths. In this sense, then, the writer appears to have understood the words of Christ (Matt. v. 33—36). Still it may be supposed that this prohibition only relates to voluntary oaths, not to those which are imposed by the duly constituted authorities.

13. *Psalms*: should be “hymns of praise.”

14, 15. That the Jews ascribed important healing powers to oil, is plain from Jer. viii. 22, xlv. 11; Luke x. 34; Mark vi. 13. James further ascribes here a power to the prayer of the elders and anointing the sick with oil, which was assuredly as little justified by experience then as it would be to-day. The appeal of the Catholics to this passage in favour of their doctrine of extreme unction is altogether inadmissible; for it contains no precept of Christ, but simply refers to usages of the time. What is spoken of here is not a sacramental transaction, but simply what is to be done for the physical and spiritual welfare of the patient.

16. Read, “The prayer of a righteous man availeth much if it be in (living) operation” [lit. “worked”].—Here the same excessive confidence in the healing power of prayer is expressed as in the preceding verses.

17, 18. See 1 Kings xvii. 1, xviii. 41 sqq.

20. The word *death* is here used in the same sense as in i. 15. The meaning of the last words of the verse is: He will save a soul from destruction by helping the convert to obtain forgiveness of his many sins.



## THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER.

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THE First Epistle of Peter purports to have been written by the apostle in Babylon (v. 13), i.e. in Rome; and (John) Mark is supposed to have been with him as a spiritual son. This is entirely in accordance with the ancient tradition, which represents Peter as having come to Rome, and there, with Paul, suffered a martyr's death in the Neronian persecution (A.D. 64). Nor is mention wanting of Silvanus, the friend of Paul, by whom Peter is supposed to have written this Epistle (1 Pet. v. 12). The whole Epistle belongs to a period of persecution of the Christians (iii. 15, 17, iv. 14—17, v. 9, 10). From such a position of affairs Peter is here represented as having addressed an Epistle to the Christians of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia.

The composition of the First Epistle of Peter by the apostle Peter in Rome at the beginning of the Neronian persecution cannot be reconciled, however, with the contents of the Epistle itself. The close association of Peter with Silvanus, the friend and follower of Paul, is simply evidence of the attempt to bring Peter and Paul together in complete harmony with one another; and the Peter of this Epistle, both in thought and expression, is an imitator of the Pauline Epistles (i. 5, ii. 6, 11, 13, iii. 18). The Epistle even betrays a dependence upon the Epistle to the Hebrews (iii. 18), the Revelation of John (v. 12), and the Epistle of James (i. 1, iv. 8, v. 5).

Decisive, however, is the fact that the Epistle assumes a universal persecution of the Christians throughout the whole world, or at any rate throughout the Roman empire, especially in v. 9.

The Neronian persecution was confined to the Christians of Rome. It was intended as a penalty inflicted upon them for the guilt of the burning of Rome. We cannot place this Epistle earlier than the time of the emperor Trajan (A. D. 98—117), who issued the first legal decree in regard to the proceedings of the Roman authorities against the Christians, and expressly enacted that the name or confession of Christianity itself, without any crime, if it were not practically denied, was to be punished with death. This is the very state of the law which the First Epistle of Peter assumes. The Christians who are slandered by the heathen as evil-doers simply because they are Christians (ii. 12, iii. 16 [iv. 14]), must live in constant expectation of being dragged to trial and condemned to death (iii. 15, 17, iv. 19). They are punished without any other guilt, simply as Christians (iii. 15, 17, iv. 1), and the penalty is death (v. 10). This persecution extends to the Christian brotherhood throughout the whole world (v. 9). The exhortations to obedience to the emperor and all who are in authority (ii. 13 sqq.), are explained by the fact that the Roman authorities had already begun to take legal proceedings against the Christians as such. Nor is it merely accidental that, in the inscription of the Epistle, Pontus and Bithynia are mentioned. It was to the governors of these provinces that the emperor Trajan sent out his decree concerning the Christians. On the other hand, that we must not look later than the time of Trajan is plain from the fact that the persecution was regarded as a "strange thing" (iv. 12), and from the reference to informers [A. V. *busybodies*, iv. 15] whom this very emperor punished.

We must conclude, then, that the Epistle was written by a Roman Christian, in the time of Trajan, in the name of the apostle Peter, whose memory was so celebrated in Rome, and that it was intended to strengthen all Christendom, but especially the most oppressed communities of Asia. Although he has written only in the name of Peter, he has exhorted oppressed and suffering Christendom in a genuinely Christian spirit. The recognition and use of this Epistle begins with the end of the first half of



the second century. Its post-apostolic origin has first been shown by modern Protestant scriptural research.

The tone of the Epistle itself also confirms what has been said above as to its origin. We find no sign remaining of that semi-legal Christianity which the real Peter represented, and represented in actual opposition to Paul. The conception of Christianity as free from the Law, which was introduced by Paul, underlies the whole. The good works which are required (ii. 14, 15, 20, iii. 6, 17, iv. 19) are no longer works of the Law. Nevertheless, the First Epistle of Peter does not take up a special Pauline position. It employs Pauline thoughts and expressions, but in a general Christian sense. This appeal in the name of Peter is Pauline in principle, but not in the sense of any definite opposition to Jewish Christianity. In iii. 21, there is a certain amount of opposition to Judaism. Elsewhere, it is not justification, but salvation of the soul generally, that is attached to faith (i. 5, 9), and the power of love to wipe out sins is acknowledged (iv. 8), after James v. 20. The believers, who are here represented simply as Gentile Christians (i. 14, 18, ii. 9, 10, iii. 6, iv. 13), have obtained the abolition of their sins through the death of Christ (i. 2, 19, ii. 21, 24, iii. 18, iv. 1), and by his resurrection have been born again unto a living hope (i. 3, 21). Christendom, which has been born again to a new life (i. 2, 3, ii. 2), is therefore the spiritual temple of God (ii. 5, iv. 17), having been made so by the indwelling of the Spirit of God (iv. 14). The only new doctrine here is that Christ, after the death of his body, preached to the spirits imprisoned in the under-world (iii. 19), and brought the gospel even to the dead (iv. 6). The doctrine of the descent of Christ into hell, which is found here for the very first time, has been one of the chief stumbling-blocks of modern rationalistic interpretation, but it contains originally the beautiful thought that the salvation of Christianity was offered even to the spirits of the under-world.

The object of the Epistle is to exhort the readers and to confirm them in their Christianity in the midst of persecution (v. 12).

After the address (i. 1, 2), the writer begins with an encouraging direction of his readers, who are in the midst of the crucial fires of persecution, to the future glory (i. 3—12). In accordance with this expectation, the suffering Christians are exhorted in general terms to holiness in the conduct of life altogether, a holiness such as belongs to Christianity, and worthy of the redemption through the blood of Christ and the destination of Christendom to be a holy people of God (i. 13—ii. 10). The exhortation to holy conduct then descends more into particulars in regard to the position of Christendom surrounded by a heathen world, and in regard to its own degrees and offices (ii. 11—iii. 12). Beginning with the relation to the heathen and the heathen authorities (ii. 11—14), it passes on to consideration of the conduct of freemen (ii. 15—17), servants or slaves (ii. 18—25), wives and husbands (iii. 1—7), and finally runs off into a general conclusion (iii. 8—12). Thirdly, more definite attention is paid in the exhortation to a steadfast confession of Christianity in a time of persecution (iii. 13—iv. 6). Sufferings must be borne for righteousness' sake after the pattern of Christ, who, having been slain in the flesh, manifested his spiritual life even in the underworld, and by his resurrection was exalted to the right hand of God (iii. 13—22). In treating of the sufferings of Christ in the flesh, the exhortation passes again to the subject of morality in general, strengthened now, however, by its reference to Christ as judge of the living and the dead (iv. 1—6). By a reference to the *nearness* of the universal judgment, the exhortation is made still more incisive and more urgent (iv. 7—19). The conclusion (cap. v.) contains general exhortations addressed to the elders and to private members of the communities (v. 1—11), and finally terminates in a purely personal statement and personal greetings (v. 12—14).



## THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER.

### i. 1, 2. *Address.*

1. *To the strangers scattered throughout, &c.*, should be "to the chosen sojourners of the dispersion in," &c. The Christians were regarded as only sojourners upon this earth (comp. i. 7, ii. 11; Phil. iii. 20; Heb. xi. 13). The dispersion of the Jewish people of God throughout the world had already been transferred to the new people of God, the Christians (James i. 1).

2. *Elect* should be omitted here, having already been taken in ver. 1.—*Sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*: i.e. sprinkling with the blood of Jesus Christ (comp. Heb. xii. 24) as the ancient people of God was sprinkled with the blood of the covenant (comp. Exod. xxiv. 8; Heb. ix. 19).

### i. 3—12. *The future glory a consolation in suffering.*

#### i. 3—9.

3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*: Christ still occupies a position *inferior* to that of God.

5. Strictly, "Who are kept (as in ward) in the power of God," &c. This being kept in ward by faith, reminds us of the keeping in ward under the Law with a view to the faith that was to come, in the Epistle to the Galatians (Gal. iii. 23). Faith is actually regarded as the medium of the divine destination to salvation, and not even, as in Paul's writings, as man's own peculiar act. This is anything rather than Petrine.

7—9. Read, "That the test of your faith may be found much more precious than gold which perishes, but is tested by fire, unto praise and glory and honour in the revelation of Jesus Christ; whom, not having seen, ye love; in whom, not now seeing him, but believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving (i.e. since ye receive) the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls."

#### i. 10—12.

The glory of Christian salvation is here exhibited by reference

to the yearning of the prophets who foretold it, and the inquisitiveness of the angels who sought to penetrate its mystery.

10. *The grace that should come unto you* should be “the grace that concerns you,” or “is directed towards you.” [Lit. “the grace unto you.”]

12. Read, “To whom it was revealed that they served not themselves, but us [or, according to the best MSS., “you”], in those things which have now been announced to you through them that have preached the gospel,” &c.—“Served us in those things,” i.e. officially announced them to us.—*With the Holy Ghost*: “through [lit. “in”] the Holy Spirit.”

i. 13—ii. 10. *General exhortation to holiness of life and conduct.*

13. *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind*: Figurative expression from the girding up of the loins in running.—*And hope*, &c.: “and hope entirely for the grace that is being offered unto you in the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

14, 15. Read, “As children of obedience, not fashioned like unto the former lusts in your ignorance, but according to the Holy One who called you, be ye also holy in all conduct.”—“The Holy One who called you” = God.

16. Comp. Levit. xi. 44, xix. 2. In accordance with the Christian view, the passage here quoted is applied to inner moral purity.

[18. *Conversation* = conduct of life.]

19. *As of a lamb without blemish and without spot*: The beasts for sacrifice were required to be without any defect; see Levit. xxii. 20 sq.

21. *That your faith, &c.*, should be, “so that your faith and hope are in God.”

22. Read, “And sanctify your souls in the obedience of truth unto unfeigned brotherly love, and love one another fervently from a pure heart.” [Some old MSS. read simply, “from the heart.”]—“In the obedience of truth:” i.e. in obedience to the truth.

[23. *For ever*: not in the oldest MSS.]

24. Comp. Is. xl. 6 sq.—*The grass withereth, &c.*: “The grass is withered and the flower fallen away.”

ii. 2. Read, “And, as new-born babes, desire ye the reasonable pure milk, that ye may increase in it unto salvation.”



4, 5. Read, "To whom approaching as unto the living stone, rejected by men, but with God chosen, precious, ye likewise as living stones are being built up, as a spiritual house, to a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable unto God through Jesus Christ."—Isaiah spoke of a chosen precious cornerstone in Sion (Is. xxviii. 16).—Christendom is here represented as the true spiritual temple of God (comp. iv. 17; 1 Cor. iii. 16 sq.; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Heb. iii. 6; 2 Thess. ii. 4; 1 Tim. iii. 15). But as a spiritual temple, Christendom serves for the execution of the sacred priestly office of bringing spiritual sacrifice. The writer is not speaking here simply of the universal priesthood of the Christians. Each individual Christian is indeed a living stone in the temple of God; but only as a community, or collectively, do they exercise the office of priest. Of any hierarchy over the community there is not a word.

6. The passage from Is. xxviii. 16 is here amalgamated with Is. viii. 14, just in the same way as it had already been in Rom. ix. 33.

7. Read, "Yours, then, who believe, is the honour; but to them that disbelieve," &c.—"The honour," in opposition to the "shame," of the unbelievers. [The point of the quotation is partly lost by calling the stone "*precious*," and then rendering this verse, "yours is the *honour*." The two Greek words are similar. The stone has been *rejected* by men, but is *precious* or *honourable* in the sight of God. There is shame and honour belonging to it. The honour is the share of the believers, the shame is the share of the unbelievers.]

8. Destination of the unbelievers to disobedience or to stumbling. In all this there is a predestination, just as in the case of faith which appears (i. 5) as purely the work of God.

9. [*A peculiar people*: i.e. a people who are God's own special possession.]—*Praises* should be "excellence."—What has been said of the Jewish nation as the ancient people of God (Is. xliii. 20 sq.; Exod. xix. 6), is here transferred to Gentile Christendom.

10. Gentile Christendom depicted after Hos. ii. 23.

ii. 11—14. *The right attitude toward the heathen and heathen rulers.*

11. *As strangers and pilgrims* on the earth, and therefore

mindful of the heavenly calling.—*From fleshly lusts, which war against the soul*: comp. Rom. vii. 23; James iv. 1.

12. *Conversation*: “conduct.”—*Whereas* should be “in the matter in which.”—Evil reports among the heathen against the Christians as evil-doers, who were accused of blasphemy, incest, cannibalism. The heathen must be brought to a different view by seeing for themselves the Christian conduct, so that finally, in the day of visitation, they may praise God on account of the beautiful deeds of the Christians (comp. v. 6; Luke xix. 44). This refers to Matt. v. 16, but here it is not until the day of God’s (gracious) visitation that the heathen will praise God on account of the beautiful deeds of the Christians.

13. The exhortation to obedience to the authorities is evidently after Rom. xiii. 1 sq., even to the very expressions used. The king, both here and in ver. 17, is the Roman emperor.

ii. 15—17. *A word to those who are free.*

17. *The brotherhood*, both here and in v. 9, is Christendom.—*[The king*: see note on ver. 13.]

ii. 18—25. *A word to the slaves.*

21. *Us . . . . us* should be “you . . . . you.”

22—24. The type of the sufferings of the Messiah is worked out after Is. liii. 9, with reference to Matt. xxvii. 27—31, 39—50, and to the circumstances of the readers, the expiation of sins after Is. liii. 5; Deut. xxi. 23, applied as in Col. ii. 14.

23. *Himself*: “it.”

24. Read, “Who himself carried up our sins in his body on to the tree.”

25. *Bishop*: properly, “overseer.”

iii. 1—7. *Married life.*

[1. After *husbands*, read, “that even if any obey not the word, they may without the word,” &c.—*Conversation* should be “conduct,” both here and in ver. 2.]

4. Read, “But the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible nature of the meek and quiet spirit which is very precious in the sight of God.”

6. *Calling him lord*: see Gen. xviii. 12.—*And are not afraid with any amazement* should be “and do not fear any terror.”



The Christian women, even in the case of mixed marriages, must fearlessly acknowledge their Christianity.

7. Read, "In the same manner, ye men, deal reasonably (lit. "dwell in reason") with that which is womanly, as with the weaker vessel, giving them honour as joint-heirs of the grace of life," &c.—*Vessel*: comp. 1 Thess. iv. 4.—"Giving them honour as joint heirs of the grace of life, in order that your prayers may not be hindered." If the women are not esteemed as Christian sisters, the prayers of the Christian husbands will not be heard, for on Christian ground the women stand on an equality with the men.

iii. 8—12. *The disposition which should unite in itself all the individual virtues together.*

10—12. From Psalm xxxiv. 12—16.

iii. 13—iv. 6. *Steadfast confession of Christ and of the holiness of Christianity in times of persecution.*

13. *If ye be followers of* should be "if ye be zealous for [lit. "are become zealots of"] that which is good."

14. Suffering for righteousness' sake, an expression which has already been used in Matt. v. 10 of the persecutions of the Christians.—[*But and if ye suffer*: i.e. "And if, after all, ye actually do suffer."]

15. Read, "But sanctify the Lord Christ [or "sanctify Christ as Lord"] in your hearts. And be ready at all times to give an answer to every one that demandeth an account of the hope that is in you, but with meekness and fear."—Sanctify the Lord Christ: i.e. hold him holy.

16. *Whereas* should be "in that in which."—[*Conversation* should be "conduct."]

18. That Christ suffered *once* is after Heb. ix. 27, 28.—*The just for the unjust*: comp. Rom. v. 6.—[*Put to death*, &c., refers to Christ.]

19, 20. The spirits in prison, disobedient in the days of Noah, to whom Christ preached after his death, are departed spirits (comp. Heb. xii. 23). The spirits in the under-world had manifested disobedience before the judgment of the flood, after which a second judgment is to come (comp. iv. 17). In Noah's ark were eight souls, viz. Noah and his three sons, together with

their wives, who were saved by water from the corrupt world. The water of the flood is strictly the means of their deliverance, of which the water of baptism is an antitype.—*When once, &c.*, should be “when the long-suffering of God was waiting,” &c.

21. Read: “The antitype of which, even baptism, doth now also save you,” &c.—*Answer*: “covenant” [lit. “question”].—Baptism which brings salvation is opposed to the Jewish washings, which are merely a putting away of uncleanness of the flesh. The baptismal confession, with question and answer, is a vow to God. Baptism, as immersion, is symbolic of the death and burial of Christ, and delivers through the resurrection of Christ, because it leads to the new life in correspondence with the resurrection of Christ (i. 3; comp. Rom. vi. 5).

22. Christ sitting at the right hand of God is Lord over all angels and powers.

iv. 1. Suffering in the flesh, whereby not the earthly life but sins cease, indicates a union with the suffering of Christ (2 Cor. v. 14).—*In the flesh* should be “according to the flesh.”—*Hath ceased*: i.e. “hath rest from sin.”

2. Read, “That the remaining time in the flesh he may no longer live to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.”

4. Read, “Wherein they think it strange that ye do not, blaspheming, run with them into the same excess of profligacy.”

6. The gospel was preached to the dead by Christ when he descended into hell, in order that, having been judged in human fashion, in death as the wages of sin (comp. Rom. v. 12) they might still, if they would turn in belief to the gospel, live in the spirit as God lives and will have us live.—*According to men*: i.e. after human fashion.—*According to God*: i.e. after divine fashion.

iv. 7—19. *The preceding exhortation is strengthened by reference to the fact that the judgment is near at hand.*

7. *Be ye therefore sober, &c.*: “be ye therefore temperate and be sober [the word is also used figuratively = “be wary, watchful”] unto prayer.”

8. [Read, “And above all things have fervent love among yourselves, for love covereth a multitude of sins.”]—From Prov. x. 12, understood as in James v. 20.



9. *Grudging* should be “murmuring.”

10. Comp. Rom. xii. 6 sqq.; 1 Cor. xii. 4 sqq.; 1 Cor. iv. 1.

11. *To whom be praise*, &c., should be “whose is praise,” &c.

12. [Read, “Beloved, be not astonished by the fire among you, which is for a trial for you, as though some strange thing had happened to you.”]—The fire is the purifying fire of tribulation in the time of persecution.

13. Read, “But in proportion as ye share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice.”—[*That when*, &c.: lit. “that in the revelation of his glory, rejoicing ye may be glad.”]

14. Read, “If ye be reproached in the name of Christ, blessed are ye; for the spirit of glory and of power, and the spirit of God resteth upon you.” The rest of the verse should be omitted.—The spirit of glory and of power, which together with the spirit of God resteth upon the despised Christians, will be the Holy Spirit (comp. Matt. v. 10, 11).

15. *Busybody in other men's matters*: a spy, sycophant. Trajan had promulgated severe laws against informers, so that this verse confirms the supposition that this Epistle was written during his reign.

16. *But let him*, &c., should be “but let him praise God in this name.”

17. The judgment of God begins with the house of God, i.e. with Christendom, and ends terribly with the unbelievers.

19. Read, “Wherefore let even them that suffer according to the will of God,” &c. [The best MSS. continue, “commit their souls in well-doing to a faithful Creator.”]

v. 1—11. *Exhortations in regard to the life of the community.*

1. It is probable that the *younger* (ver. 5) are contrasted with the *elders* here. Still what is meant here is not simply those who are older in years, but the presidents of the community, with whom the apostle ranks himself as a fellow-elder.

2. *Taking the oversight*: An allusion to the office of bishop as overseer [two of the oldest MSS. omit this].—[*Willingly*: some ancient MSS. add, “according to God.”—*Not for filthy lucre*: probably better, “not being sordidly desirous of gain;” comp. 1 Tim. iii. 8.]

3. *God's heritage* should be “the lots.”—The officers of the

community were elected among the Christians, as well as among others, by lot (Acts i. 26), whence the name *clerus* (lot) for the clergy [hence the English words clerk, clergy, &c.]. What is meant here, however, is not the officers, but the whole community, spoken of like the ancient community of God to which the promised land was divided by lots (comp. Num. xxvi. 55; Josh. xiv. 2, xix. 51).

4. *The chief Shepherd*, whose under-shepherds the elders are (comp. Heb. xiii. 20).—[*A crown*, &c.: strictly, “the imperishable (Gr. “*amaranthine*”) crown of glory.”]

5. *Ye younger*: This, like the words *the elders* in ver. 1, is not to be understood to refer simply to the age of those addressed. The expression already practically answers pretty nearly to the term “laity.”—*For God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble*: from Prov. iii. 34, after James iv. 6.

7. After Ps. lv. 22.

10. *Us* should be “you.”—*Make you perfect*, &c.: “will make you perfect, will stablish, strengthen, settle you.”

v. 12, 13. *Personal.*

12. Silvanus, or Silas, appears elsewhere as a companion of Paul.

13. *The church that is at Babylon elected together with you*: lit. “The chosen with you at Babylon,” i.e. the Christian community in Rome. As the imperial heathen city of the time, Rome bears the name of Babylon as early as the date of the Apocalypse (Rev. xiv. 8, xvi. 19, xvii. 5, xviii. 2, 10, 21).—*Marcus* [Mark] not literally the son of Peter, but his spiritual son (comp. 1 Cor. iv. 17; Philem. 10).

v. 14. *Farewell salutation.*



## THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER.

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THE Second Epistle of Peter assumes the existence of the first (iii. 1), and purports to have been written by the apostle in view of approaching death (i. 14, 15). It is thrown into the form of a written memorial which the apostle desires to leave to the believers (i. 12 sq.); but the real occasion which gives rise to it is the appearance of false doctrines and doubts. The false doctrine is the free-thinking Gnosticism, as in the Epistle of Jude, which is here transcribed (ch. ii.), with the omission of the quotations from the apocryphal writings, and with some additions. This Gnosticism already appears here as a declared heresy (ii. 1). The exclusion of it, which was aimed at in the Epistle of Jude, is here essentially completed (notwithstanding what is said in ii. 13). The doubts we have mentioned refer to the expectation of the return of Christ, the ground of which appeared to be failing through long delay. Both these phenomena point to the very latest age of New Testament literature. It is assumed, moreover, that the Epistles of Paul have already been collected; and they are regarded as holy scripture (iii. 15, 16). The composition of this Epistle by the apostle Peter himself is out of the question. We must look rather to the second half of the second century. It is probable that it was written by a Roman Christian.

It is not till the third century that we find the first trace of any knowledge of this Epistle, and even as late as the beginning of the fifth century the majority rejected it.

In regard to the attitude of the writer, it may be said that he

belongs to the period of the reconstruction of the Catholic Church. Of the attitude of that section of the church to which the actual Peter belonged, scarcely anything remains. In place of the historical opposition of Peter to Paul, we find a brotherly recognition of Paul and his Epistles (iii. 15, 16). The writer bases the true faith first of all upon prophetic utterance as a pure inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and then, in addition, upon his own testimony as an eye-witness (i. 16—21). He appears as the representative of this true faith first against the free-thinking Gnosticism, which he speaks of as worse than pure heathenism (ii. 20, 21), and then against those who doubt as to the return of Christ, to whom he declares that in the sight of God a thousand years are as one day, and that the long-suffering of God, who desires to admit all to the possibility of repentance, is the cause of the delay (iii. 8, 9). The writer then sets forth his peculiar doctrine of the destruction of the world by fire (iii. 10, 12). This Epistle is mainly instructive as a document of the formation of the Catholic Church.

After the address to all fellow-believers (i. 1—4), and a general exhortation (i. 5—11), Peter sets forth the motive which he has for writing, introducing himself as an eye-witness of Jesus, and appealing further to divinely inspired prophecy (i. 12—21). He then turns to the attack upon the (Gnostic) false teachers, whom he speaks of first as if he were foretelling what is to come, and afterwards as though they were already present. In this attack he expresses all his deepest horror (ch. ii.). Then he answers the doubts of his contemporaries as to the return of Christ by an appeal to the divine standard of time, and the delay of divine long-suffering (iii. 1—10). The mention of the impending destruction of the world by fire, leads to the final exhortation to make preparation for the day of the Lord. In support of this the writer finally appeals to Paul and his Epistles, referring at the same time to misunderstandings of the latter (iii. 11—16). The conclusion of the Epistle touches once more upon the notorious perversions of the age (iii. 17, 18).



## THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER.

### i. 1—4. *The address to all fellow-believers.*

1. *The righteousness, &c.*, should be “the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—The deity of Christ is here assumed (comp. Tit. ii. 13).

3, 4. Read, “Seeing that his divine power hath given unto us all things that serve unto life and godliness by his own glory and virtue, by which have been given unto us precious and very great promises (namely), that ye by these should be made partakers of the divine nature, if ye flee from the worldly destruction of desire” [lit. “having fled away (or escaped) from the destruction in the world in desire”].

### i. 5—11. *General exhortation to religious and moral excellence.*

5. *And beside this*: “wherefore.”

7. “And to godliness brotherly love, and to brotherly love universal love.” This universal love extends still further than the brotherly love.

8. *In the knowledge* should be “unto the knowledge.”

9. *Cannot see afar off* should be “is short-sighted.”—Such an one is blind to the higher light, and his power of vision is only sufficient for that which is near at hand, for earthly things.

### i. 12—21.

*The writer's motive in writing, and the importance which attaches to him as an eye-witness of Jesus, honoured with special divine inspiration.*

13. *In this tabernacle*: i.e. the tabernacle of the body (comp. 2 Cor. v. 1). In ver. 14 this metaphor is confused with that of clothing.

14. This revelation of Christ concerning the impending end of Peter's life may be found in John xxi. 18, 19.

16—18. Reference to the narrative of the transfiguration, Matt. xvii. 1 sq.

19. Read, "We have a still surer prophetic word."—Still firmer than the figure of the transfiguration, which merely indicates the second coming of Christ, is the prophetic word of the final appearance of Christ, which foretells its complete fulfilment. It is an apocryphal book of the Old Testament that is here quoted (2 Esdras xii. 42, "and as a lamp in a dark place"). The dark place signifies the darkness in the hearts of the Christians, in which the full light does not shine until the coming of Christ (comp. Eph. v. 14).

20. No prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, i.e. of human invention. The prophets themselves did not know to what their prophecies referred. So that it is only by divine enlightenment that the interpretation is made possible.

21. "For prophecy was never produced by the will of man," &c. Prophecy is a pure inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

## ii. *Against false teachers.*

Here we have almost the whole Epistle of Jude transcribed, with the exception of the quotations from two apocryphal books, viz. the Assumption of Moses and the Book of Enoch, and with some additions.

[1. *Damnable heresies*: lit. "heresies [or "sects"] of destruction;" the same word as "destruction" at the end of the verse.]

2. Read, "And many shall imitate their debaucheries," &c.

3. Read, "And in avarice, with words of their own imagination, they will seek to make a profit out of you, and their judgment for a long time past delayeth not, and their destruction slumbereth not."—The Gnostic false teachers lectured for money (comp. ver. 14).

4. [*But cast them down*, &c.: lit. "but having sent them to Tartarus in chains (or, as some of the oldest MSS. read, "in caves") of nether gloom, delivered them to be reserved unto judgment."]—On the sinful angels, comp. Jude, ver. 6.

5. *Noah, the eighth person*: comp. Gen. vii. 13. Noah was one of the eight who were saved in the deluge (comp. 1 Pet. iii. 10). *The old world* is the world before the deluge. [*Noah . . . a preacher* [lit. herald] *of righteousness*: There is no record in the Old Testament of any saying of Noah's, except the cursing of Canaan and blessing of Shem (Gen. ix. 25 sq.). The reference



here seems to be to Gen. vii. 1, Noah being regarded as a type, and so, unconsciously, a herald, of the righteousness to come.]

[7. *Filthy conversation*: better, "licentious conduct."]

8. *That righteous man* should be "the righteous man."—*Dwelling among them in seeing and hearing*: i.e. While he dwelt among them, so that he could not help seeing and hearing their wickedness.

[9. *Unjust*: better, "unrighteous."]

10, 11. *Presumptuous*, &c., should be "bold, presumptuous; they tremble not to blaspheme against glories; whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, pronounce not a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord."—Contempt of dominion and blasphemy of glories, as in Jude, ver. 8. The description of the false teachers here passes from the future to the present. The actual time of the composition of the Epistle appears.—With ver. 11 comp. Jude, ver. 9.

12. [Lit. "But these, as unreasoning animals, born naturally to be taken and destroyed, blaspheming in the things that they know not, shall also be destroyed in their destruction, receiving the wages of unrighteousness (or, as some old MSS. read, "suffering wrong as the wages of unrighteousness"), counting the day's revel pleasure (i.e., as some take it, "finding their pleasure in self-indulgence, which lasts but for a day," or, as A.V. has it, "counting it pleasure to riot in the day-time").]—*Spots are they*, &c., should be, "They are blots and monsters who riot in their love-feasts when they feast with you." There is, however, another reading: "in their deceit," for "in their love-feasts," i.e. with that which they have gained by deceit (comp. Jude 12).

[14. *Cursed children*: lit. "children of a curse."]

15, 16. Comp. Num. xxii. 5 sqq.; Jude 11.

17. *Mist* should be "gloom" [strictly, "the gloom of the lower world," the same word that is rendered "nether gloom" in the note on ver. 4].

18. *They allure*, &c., should be "they allure in lusts of the flesh through debaucheries those who are scarcely escaping from those who walk in error."—Those who are scarcely escaping from those who walk in error, are weak Christians who are almost carried away by the unbelieving Gentiles (comp. ver. 20).

[19. *Servants*: strictly, "slaves."]

20. "The last things are worse with them than the first:" an echo of Matt. xii. 45; Luke xi. 26.

22. Comp. Prov. xxvi. 11.

iii. 1—10. *Confutation of the doubts concerning the return of Christ.*

2. The prophets are here added to the words of Jude, ver. 17.—*The commandment*, &c., should be "the commandment of your apostles," &c.—[The words "of the Lord and Saviour" depend upon "commandments," not upon "apostles."]

5. Comp. Gen. i. 2, 9.—*The earth standing out of the water and in the water* should be "the earth formed out of water and through water."

7. *By the same word*: "by his word" [the MSS. vary].—A destruction of the world by fire (comp. vv. 10—13) was not taught in the Old Testament, nor is it found elsewhere in the New Testament. The Stoic philosophers held the doctrine of a destruction of the world by fire to be repeated from time to time. A burning of the world once for all is spoken of in the Jewish Sibylline prophecies about 140 B.C., and about 79 A.D. There were Gnostics also, as, for example, the Valentinians, who expected that the material world would finally perish by fire. Following our Second Epistle of Peter, this idea became more and more generally accepted among Christians.

8. Contrast between divine and human reckoning of time, after Ps. xc. 4.

9. *To us-ward* should be "on your account."

10. The day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night (comp. 1 Thess. v. 2). The elements which are to be dissolved with heat (comp. iii. 17) are not what are now commonly known as the four elements, but the heavenly powers regarded as animated, viz. sun, moon and stars as the elements of the universe (comp. Gal. iv. 3, 9; Col. ii. 8, 20).—[The words *in the night* are omitted in three of the best MSS. Probably they have simply been added here from 1 Thess. v. 2.]

iii. 11—18. *Exhortation to preparation for the day of the Lord.*  
*Conclusion.*

iii. 11—16.

Holy conduct is the first sign of preparation.



11. *Conversation*: "Conduct."

12. Read, "Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of the Lord, on account of which," &c.—It is necessary not only to hold fast to the expectation of the coming of the Lord, concerning which doubts were already arising (iii. 4), but also to hasten it by bringing oneself into the state which God in his long-suffering is waiting for (comp. iii. 9). That this is the writer's meaning is clear from iii. 14.

13. *Nevertheless*: "but."—*His promise* should be "his promises."—The promises of a new heaven and a new earth are found in Is. lxv. 17, lxvi. 22; Rev. xxi. 1 sq. Righteousness dwells in those who endure piously.

15. This reference to one of Paul's writings is probably to 2 Thess. ii. 1 sq.

16. The perversion of that which is hard to understand in Paul was probably not limited simply to the doctrine of the return of Christ, but extended to the whole opposition to the primitive apostolic Christianity, which the writer refers to a false interpretation of the Epistles of Paul—and also of *the other scriptures*. The Epistles of Paul are already regarded as holy scripture.

iii. 17, 18.

The second sign of readiness is freedom from errors and a mature recognition of Christ as the Saviour.

[18. *For ever*: lit. "to the day of eternity."]

## THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

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THIS Epistle is mentioned by Clement of Alexandria (who died between 211 and 220 A.D.) as a "*Catholic*," i.e. "*general*," Epistle, and is further included in the series of *Catholic* Epistles. The ancient church judged rightly in thus regarding it not as a letter in the ordinary sense, but as a writing which, while in epistolary form, was really addressed to *the whole church*. The authorship of the Epistle was not doubted, simply because its contents corresponded to a want of the church. That which was Catholic seemed necessarily to be Apostolic. The result, however, of scientific methods of inquiry has been to show that the apostolic origin of the Epistle cannot be maintained. The Epistle was not mentioned and used, or at any rate there is no sure evidence of its being mentioned and used, until towards the end of the second century. The external evidence regarding it is just the same as in the case of the Fourth Gospel. More than this, the question generally as to the origin of the Epistle is most closely intertwined with that of the origin of the Gospel. Not only the general ideas and the theological position, but even the expression and style of the two are so very much alike, that we are compelled to refer both to the same writer. The supposition of the apostolic origin of the First Epistle falls to the ground along with the theory of the apostolic origin of the Fourth Gospel, and moreover the Epistle itself refers to the tradition of the apostles in a way which cannot belong to the apostolic age (ii. 24).

The Epistle has been regarded as a recommendation of the Fourth Gospel intended to accompany it, or a second part of the



Gospel, the practical or polemical part, which was at first united with the Gospel and afterwards separated from it. Of this, however, there is no proof. We must rest content with the plain fact that the writer, in view of setting forth the ecclesiastical conception which he represents, was not satisfied to restrict himself to the form of the gospel narrative, and chose to make use of the epistolary form also for his purpose. That the Epistle is later than the Gospel is very probable; partly because the Epistle evidently purports to have been written by an apostle, and yet gives no hint as to his identity, but leaves the reader to infer it from the connection of the Epistle with the Fourth Gospel; and partly from allusions to the Gospel, in which it is assumed that it has already become publicly known (comp. i. 1—3 with John i. 1—14; i. 4 with John xv. 11; ii. 27 with John xiv. 26, &c.). It must be acknowledged, however, that some have regarded the Epistle as the earlier writing, especially on the ground that we find mention in it of the "last day" (ii. 18, 28, iii. 2, iv. 3), while it is said that the Gospel is silent in regard to this, and therefore belongs to a period when the hope of the return of the Lord was already falling more into decay. But while it is quite certain that the withdrawal of this hope in the Gospel is a sign of its late origin, the hope itself does not seem even there to have been entirely surrendered (comp. John v. 28, 29).

If it be asked what special occasion moved the author of the Epistle to write it, we may find an answer in the dangerous growth of the Gnostic sects (see Introduction to the Gospel, Vol. I. pp. 197 sq.). In the commentary on the Epistle, it will be shown that the references to them, and especially to their view of the personality of Jesus, are much more extensive than is usually supposed (comp. especially notes on v. 13—21). There is no trace in the Epistle of any contest with Jews and Jewish Christians. We might rather suppose that the Jews, with their denial of the divine sonship of Jesus in the fourth Gospel, are intended to take the place of the Gnostics, whom the writer could scarcely transpose to the time of Jesus.

An inscription of the Epistle "To the Parthians," which arose from an error, was for a long time accepted as reliable, and the Epistle was consequently taken to have been addressed to the Jewish Christians among the Parthians. But as the writing itself is only thrown loosely into epistolary form, and all its utterances are in the tone of the fatherly appeal of the aged apostle under whose authority the writer shelters himself, we cannot properly look for any address at all. The Epistle is in fact addressed to all those who hold the faith of the church, and not limited to any particular section. This is the only supposition which is consistent with the loose epistolary form, and with the subject matter of the composition.

The argument of the Epistle is not very easy to trace. The difficulty is due to its apparently fragmentary character and the loose connection of the thoughts contained in it. In despair of finding any proper sequence of ideas, many have sought to infer from this want that the Epistle itself must have been composed by the apostle when enfeebled by old age. Some, again, speak of the "easy and familiar" style, which maintains no strict order and easily repeats itself. The Epistle, however, shows quite as decided traces of artistic arrangement and strict thought as the Fourth Gospel (see especially ii. 12—14, v. 6—9, v. 18—21). If one attends to the connecting links between these peculiar series of thought, with their mystic language struggling to set forth the inner life in all its fulness and reality, the following result should appear as to the arrangement of the material of the Epistle.

i. 1—4. *The Introduction.* The form of the salutation (which sounds somewhat weak in verse 4, viz. in the wish that the joy of the readers may be full) is made a vehicle to convey the central thought of the writer, his doctrine concerning the nature and person of Christ, which he regards as the very kernel or pole-star of the gospel. The conclusion of the Epistle brings us back again to the very same thought (v. 20). Starting from this point, the apostolic address, which is rather hortatory and con-



solatory than directly didactic, proceeds in three successive discourses. These three discourses all deal with the same subject, but they attack it from different points, and each one is more profound and penetrating than the preceding, so that there is an unmistakable climax which is reached by three successive stages.

*The First Part* of the apostolic appeal (i. 5—ii. 11) starts from the fundamental truth of the gospel that God is light, whence is inferred the necessity of "walking in the light," i.e. in the commandments of God, and especially in love.

*The Second Part* (ii. 12—iii. 18) starts from the fact that the readers are actually in possession of salvation, a fact which is set forth in three-fold form and with increasing intensity. To these three forms of this possession corresponds a three-fold exhortation: 1. Be steadfast in the love of the Father (ii. 15—17); 2. Deny not the Son, but retain the apostolic doctrine concerning Christ (ii. 18—28); 3. Keep yourselves unspotted from the works of the devil, especially from Cain's sin of an unloving spirit (ii. 29—iii. 18).

*The Third Part* (iii. 19—v. 12) proceeds with the blessed consciousness of sonship with freest access to God, and adds to this the two-fold evangelical commandment of faith in the name of Jesus, as the Son of God, and brotherly love. From this springs a confident admonition to stand fast in faith in him who has appeared in the flesh, in spite of all the seductions of false prophets (iv. 1—6), and a second admonition to be steadfast in the brotherly love which springs from God, unites us to God, and is founded upon a faith supported by the testimony of God himself (iv. 7—v. 12). This testimony to the divinely established faith in the Son, without whom no man can have life (v. 12), brings the third part to a close.

*The Conclusion* (v. 13—21) not only states the purpose which the writer has before him, but also contains a warning against any fellowship with those who, by their denial of him who has been manifested in the flesh, are involved in deadly sin, and against apostasy from the true God who is eternal life. Those

who have regarded the concluding verses (v. 14—21) as an appendix which has no internal connection with the fundamental principle of the Epistle, a kind of after-thought on the part of the writer, or even an addition made by another hand, such as we find in the twenty-first chapter of the fourth Gospel, only show how imperfectly they have succeeded in understanding either the ideas or the construction of the Epistle.



## THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

### INTRODUCTION. i. 1—4.

The salutation is intended to introduce the leading thought of the Epistle at once into the reader's mind. It cannot fail to remind us of the introduction to the Fourth Gospel. It contains exactly the same view of the eternal Word of life, which had come into the world in a visible and tangible form in the person of Jesus Christ (John i. 14, xx. 27). The writer further desires to appear as an apostolic eye-witness. Hence the representation of his authority is here still more fictitious than in the Gospel. In the Gospel, it is only for the statement of xix. 34 that he directly appeals to the authority of John as an eye-witness (comp. Vol. I. pp. 19, 203 sq.). In this First Epistle, there can be no doubt that he intends to represent John himself as speaking throughout.

1. From ver. 2, it is clear that *that which was from the beginning* can only mean the Son of God (as in ii. 13, 14), and not the gospel. That he is spoken of as "that which," instead of "he who," is only due to the comparison with what follows.—*Seen*: or better, "beheld," i.e. seen for some time, not simply for a moment. The emphasis here laid upon the tangibility (*our hands have handled*) is due to the writer's opposition to the Gnostic school, which dissipated the human life of the Redeemer into a mere appearance of reality.—*Word of life*: This does not mean the word "concerning life," but the personal Word who is the source of life for all, and hence is called *the Life* in ver. 2.

2. This Eternal Life is a person, and as such a complete reality, who has become ours by revealing himself to us.

3. The plural pronoun *we* is probably intended to include the testimony of the other apostles.—*With us*: Fellowship with those who declare this message, is more definitely fellowship with the Father and the Son, i.e. an actual fellowship in eternal life, which must of course lead to perfect joy.

4. An extension of the usual greeting, which simply wishes the readers "joy"—corresponding to the lengthiness of the whole of the first sentence. [Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford and Tregelles, following two of the best MSS., agree in reading, "And these things we write, that our joy may be full." This must then be understood, not as a salutation, but as the expression of the writer's desire that his joy, and the joy of those whom he represents, may be made perfect by the success of his Epistle in healing the divisions of the church, and uniting in brotherly love all who "confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh" (iv. 2).]

PART I. i. 5—ii. 11.

i. 5—ii. 2. *The believers are warned against walking in darkness.*

5. *Of him* should be "from him," i.e. from the Son of God who has appeared.—*God is light*: This denotes the perfection of God; it excludes alike the evil and the worthless. The complete revelation of this "light" took place through the Son. It is the foundation of perfect saving knowledge, inasmuch as the fulfilment of our divine destiny has its roots in it.

6. *Darkness* should be "the darkness."—Fellowship with God allows no evil conduct. He who is in darkness is not in the light. To confess God, and yet to sin, is a practical denial of the truth.

7. Along with fellowship with God goes also the fellowship of the redeemed among themselves, and the true fountain of purification is opened to them.—The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth continuously, as long as sin still remains, inasmuch as faith in God's act of love, completed in the surrender of His Son to death, breaks down the power of sin and leads to the remission of debt.

8. We cannot deny that we have sin. To do so would itself be self-deception, and a proof that we have no part in the truth.

9. *Sins*: It should be noticed that the writer speaks of sins in the plural. We must confess not only our sinfulness in general, but our individual sins and faults. Probably this includes penitent confession before the congregation.—*He is faithful and just*, &c.: God manifests His faithfulness in the prospective forgiveness, His justice (or better, righteousness), in cleansing us from all unrighteousness.



10. We not only deceive ourselves (ver. 8), but we also dispute the truthfulness of God, who cares for us as for sinners, and thereby declares us to be sinners.—His word is a word that redeems from sins, and that therefore cannot manifest its saving power in one who denies his sin. There is no doubt that this is connected with the writer's contest with the Gnostics, who regarded themselves as the pre-eminently spiritual.

ii. 1. *Children*: This expresses the warm feeling of a father's heart, but at the same time it claims filial respect.—*Sin* = fall. This refers to such sins as endanger the whole possession of salvation and participation in Christian fellowship. Such a sinner is directed to the mediation and advocacy of Jesus Christ before God, penitent confession of the sin being of course assumed (i. 9). Only one who is righteous can effectually pray for the unrighteous.—[*Advocate*: Gr. "Paraclete," the same word that is rendered "Comforter" in John xiv. 16, 26, xv. 26, xvi. 7.]

2. Jesus Christ is not only an advocate, but also a propitiation [there is no definite article in the Greek], i.e. his death contains in itself the power of removing guilt and judgment. It is just as the propitiatory sacrifice which suffices for the sin of the whole world, that he is also the effectual advocate for those who are his in individual serious falls into sin.

ii. 3—11. *Admonition to walk in the commandments of Jesus and especially in brotherly love.*

3. *Hereby we do know that we know him*: i.e. that we have a true knowledge of God and not merely imaginary.—*His*: God's, not Christ's.

5. *Verily*: i.e. "in truth."—Pious obedience to the word of God is the measure of love to God, and the genuine sign of belonging to God.

6. *As he* (i.e. Christ) *walked*: That we should walk in the footsteps of Christ is the command of God.

7. The commandment which is not new, but old, is usually taken (with ref. to John xiii. 34) to be the commandment of love, but without sufficient ground. The context shows that the reference is to the requirements of the gospel generally. The writer says that he does not write a new commandment, for man shrinks in fear from new demands. Yet in another connection he speaks of it (ver. 8) as a new commandment, in order

to guard against its being received with indifference as a thing universally known. It is new in the world and to the world, inasmuch as it has never before been made a perfect truth, but is now being made so in Christ and those who are his; now that the darkness, i.e. the ungodly state of sin and blindness, is passing away and the true light already shines.—The words *from the beginning* at the end of the verse should be omitted.

[8. *Is past*, some render “is passing away.”]

9. Brotherly love is a very necessary part of the true walking in light. What is meant is not neighbourly love generally, but love of the brethren in the Christian community.

10. *Abideth*: In love lies a protecting and preserving power. He who loveth is free from offence, and is not made to fall.

11. *In darkness* should be “in the darkness.”

## PART II. ii. 12—iii. 18.

ii. 12—14. *Three grounds upon which the three exhortations rest.*

12—14. Some have translated here, “I write unto you. . . . *that*,” &c. (instead of *because*); but this is incorrect, being in contradiction to the parallel in ver. 21, and altogether weakening the sense.—*His*, i.e. Christ’s, inasmuch as he is the advocate (ii. 1) and the propitiation (ii. 2). The expression *for his name’s sake* is probably used with a reference to the idea of believing on his name (v. 13) [see note however on v. 13.] Faith, according to the Epistle, is the channel of salvation and so also of forgiveness.—*Him that is from the beginning*: the only begotten (i. 1).—*The wicked one*: the devil, the prince of this world, who, indeed, since the work of redemption was completed has been powerless against the believers.—*Children* is a term of endearment intended to apply to all to whom the Epistle is addressed. *Fathers* denotes the elder portion, and *young men* the younger portion, each being reminded of that particular aspect of salvation which must afford them the strongest motive for the pursuit of a Christian life. The old, in view of approaching death, find comfort in him who was from the beginning before the world, and so is surety to them for eternal life. The young men, who stand in the midst of fiery temptation, must derive courage and firmness from the thought that the hardest



thing of all is already accomplished, that by their faith they have already won the victory over the prince of this world.—Corresponding with this three-fold *I write*, we now find three times *I have written*. *I write*, in the last sentence of ver. 13, should be “I have written.” The words *I write* (vv. 12, 13) undoubtedly refer to what immediately follows, what the writer has in his mind and is just going to write, viz. the exhortations to which vv. 12—14 form an introduction, and the motive of which is contained in these verses. The words *I have written* refer, on the other hand, not to anything that has already been written, but to the act of writing the whole Epistle itself (comp. v. 13). What the writer means is, I should not have written to you at all unless you had known, &c. We certainly must not suppose that any letter had previously been written, or that the Fourth Gospel is here referred to. This repetition is deliberately and skilfully planned to impress more strongly on the readers’ hearts the three motives of the writer. It serves to confirm what he says by developing and explaining it.—The word *children* is not intended to denote the infant portion of the community, but is an affectionate term including all members.—*Ye have known the Father*: Forgiveness is an individual manifestation, the chief manifestation indeed, of the fatherly love of God. They know and possess it fully, with all its blessed consequences.—*Him that is from the beginning*: This is simply repeated, and standing as it does between the variations in the first and third of the three clauses, this simple repetition is the more impressive. This knowledge of the Son is a point which the writer especially desires to keep clearly in view. He hastens on to it in ver. 13, and returns to it again in iv. 2. The extension of the writer’s declaration of his motive in writing to the young men is only explanatory. Let them know and consider that they are strong, that is to say, strong in overcoming temptations on the part of the world, and that the basis of their strength, the word of God, has a place in them, and that by means of faith in the word they have already overcome the evil one, so that, as far as they are concerned, he is already vanquished, and in regard to him they have only to take care that their victory is not snatched away from them again.

ii. 15—17. *First exhortation, answering to the first motive.*

Put far away from you the love of the world, and be steadfast in the love of the Father.

15. *The world*, against which the readers are warned, is the vain and unclean impulses of man as displayed in non-christian society.—*The things that in the world*: i.e. the treasures which it offers, and which are pursued in it.—Love of the world and love to God are inconsistent with one another; hence love of the world is not for those who *know the Father*, and have received from Him *forgiveness of sins*.

16. *Lust*, or desire, placed in connection with its object and its satisfaction.—*Lust of the flesh*: probably all those sensual pleasures which we speak of as debauchery.—*Lust of the eyes*: the sinful gratification of the eyes by immoral spectacles (it must not be supposed to mean avarice).—*The pride of life*: a showy manner of life which is inwardly worthless. A definite classification of different kinds of worldly love is not to be looked for here. The readers simply have the well-known phenomena of the world pointed out to them.

17. He who loves the world passes away with the world and its lust.

ii. 18—28. *The second exhortation, corresponding to the second motive.*

Be steadfast in the apostolic doctrine that Jesus is the Christ, that so you may be in the Son and in the Father.

18. [*Last time*: lit. "last hour."—*Shall come*: lit. cometh.—*Last time*: lit. "last hour."]—The end of the present age of the world. The appearance of Christ is at hand.—The Rabbis also speak of an Antichrist. According to Christian ideas, the appearance of Antichrist was to precede the return of Christ and the manifestation of his glory.—*Many*: From the appearance of many, the writer infers that the one Antichrist is at hand. The use of the plural makes the definition of *Antichrist* not only more comprehensive, but also more spiritual. The writer considers the denial of divine truth to be the essence of antichristianity, especially the denial of divine truth regarding the person of Jesus Christ.

19. *They went out from us*: Here the writer is evidently



speaking of a school which had already gone to the length of actual separation.—*But they were not of us*: They never belonged properly and inwardly to us. There is no bond of relationship between them and us.

20. *Unction*: i.e. “anointing.” You are in possession of the Spirit. The Gnostics, whom the writer of the Epistle is attacking, in their conceit claimed that they alone were truly filled by the Spirit, and consequently they refused to admit that the general body of the church, the Catholics, as they are called, were in possession of the Spirit.—*From the Holy One*: i.e. from God. Possibly an antithesis is here understood, viz. that this anointing is from God, and not, like that of the antichristians, from the unholy and lying god of this world.—*And ye know all things*: The truth of the gospel is disclosed to you. This also is probably directed against the pride of the Gnostics, who denied that the church possessed the true and full knowledge, and claimed it entirely for their own little circle. [There are two ancient MSS. that read, “Ye do all know.”]

22. Read, “Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son.”—The denial that Jesus is the Christ is set forth as the climax of falsehood. In this consists the peculiar essence of antichristianity, the necessary sequel to which, in the writer’s view, is the denial of the Father also, a consequence which the Gnostics themselves, it must be confessed, did not infer.

[23. The words in italics in this verse, though omitted in many of the later MSS., are found in the four oldest, and are undoubtedly genuine.]

24. [*Abide . . . remain . . . continue*: the same word in the Greek.]—The readers are directed to the primitive apostolic doctrine. If they firmly adhere to this, they will preserve an abiding communion with the Son, and through him with the Father, and so preserve eternal life.

27. Read, “But as one and the same anointing [so some MSS. read, but others “his anointing”] teacheth you concerning all things, so it is true and is no lie; and as it (i.e. the anointing) hath taught you, so remain in him.”—“One and the same,” i.e. for you and for everything.—*And is truth, &c.*: You may trust to the testimony of this Spirit. It will not give you any lie.—*In*

*him*: i.e. in Christ, who is the very person concerning whom the Spirit testifies and teaches.

28. [*When he shall appear*: or perhaps “if he shall appear.”]—*And not be ashamed*, &c., should be “and not have to depart in shame from him at his coming.”

ii. 29—iii. 18. *The third exhortation, answering to the third motive.*  
Practise righteousness and brotherly love.

ii. 29—iii. 10. *Practise righteousness.*

29. *He*: i.e. Jesus Christ, in whom as the Son ye must abide.—*Doeth*: The emphasis is on this word (comp. iii. 7, 18). It is not talking of righteousness, but the practice of it, that shows the child of God.—*Ye know that every one*, &c., should be “know ye that every one,” &c.: From their knowledge that he is righteous they are to draw this conclusion. [The Greek is ambiguous, and may either be taken thus or as in A.V.]—*He . . . him*: i.e. God, not Christ.

iii. 1. *The sons of God*: “children of God.” [So the Greek, after which the oldest MSS. add, “and (such) we are.”]—The greatest, indeed the all-embracing, gift bestowed by the Divine love is the Divine sonship.—*Should be called*: i.e. should be appointed to the rank and privilege of children of God (comp. Rom. viii. 17).—*The world*: We are, it is true, not recognized as such in all our glory by the world. Rather do we receive precisely the opposite treatment. We may comfort ourselves in this by remembering that the world knows not God himself, so that our treatment at the hands of the world is only the same as His.

2. In spite of the world’s refusal to recognize us as such, we are already children of God, and still greater things are in store for us, nothing less, in fact, than that complete likeness to God, i.e. participation in His glory and enjoyment of it, which shall be communicated to us by our seeing Him in His own complete nature.—[*When* should probably be “if.”]—*He shall*: “it shall.”

3. *Purifieth himself* should be “keepeth himself pure,” i.e. preserveth his stainlessness.—*He*: i.e. Christ. He is our example. His purity is the only true and authorized standard for ours.

4. Read, “Every one that committeth sin committeth a breach of the law, and sin is the breach of the law.”—*Whosoever commit-*



*teth sin* = whoever leads a life of sin.—No doubt there were many in those times, as in our own day, to whom a life of sin appeared to be merely weakness, and unavoidable. Among the Gnostics, however, against whose influence this Epistle is especially intended to warn its readers, a school soon made its appearance which, under the pretext that the perfect are free from the Law, gave the rein to every lust, and boasted of its denial of Jesus as merely the Messiah of the Law. In opposition to this, the writer declares that every commission of sin (of course as *willed*) is a breach of the Law, i.e. a positive transgression of the Divine will. In fact, this is declared to be the very essence of sin.

5. [*Our*: omitted by some of the best MSS.]—The writer appeals against seductive errors to the Christian consciousness of the readers, which declares that the manifestation of the Son is equivalent to the abolition of sin and guilt, and that the Redeemer himself is sinless.

6. To abide in him and to sin are inconsistent with one another. Therefore whosoever truly and in the full sense of the words *abideth in him*, sinneth not. From this thought, to which it must be confessed experience only feebly corresponds, follows the obligation of not desiring to sin. A man of sin is not only without part in him, but is altogether without any understanding of him (*hath not seen him, neither known him*).

7. "Little children, let no man lead you astray:" From this we see that the danger, which threatened the readers, of mistaking the nature of sin was due to false teaching. These words further give to ver. 6 a definite application. These preachers of a life of moral indifference are the very reverse of men who know Christ, although they lay claim to a special knowledge.—*He that doeth righteousness*: We must not only talk of righteousness, but must also practise it, exhibit it in our lives, just as Jesus proved by his acts that he is the righteous one.

8. What is meant here is only a spiritual and moral connection and descent, not a natural relation such as we find described to some extent in the writings of the Jewish Rabbis.—*From the beginning*: i.e. the beginning of the world. His conduct has never been anything different since the world began.—*The works of the devil*: everything that is evil is indirectly a work of the devil.

9. *His* (i.e. God's) *seed*: This in the Johannine writings is the primal creative power of life, the same thing as "the Spirit."—The practical application of this is, that just so far as the birth from God is perfected in any one, the man in whom it is perfected no longer lives in sin.—*Cannot*: That is to say, it is contrary to his nature.

iii. 11—18. *Practise brotherly love.*

11. *From the beginning*: i.e. the beginning of their knowledge of the gospel. That is to say, it is a fundamental commandment.

12. Read, "Not as Cain was of the evil one and murdered his brother; and wherefore murdered he him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous."—*Not as Cain*: i.e. We must not be as Cain.

13. Cain is to the writer a type of the world in its hostility to the children of God. His brother is a type of the men of God suffering from this hostility on the part of the world.

14. [*His brother*: omitted by three out of the four oldest MSS.]—Those who are exposed to murderous hatred have already passed the entrance into the true and inalienable life, while the unloving persecutors remain in death. The proof that they have entered into life is the brotherly love itself.

15. *And ye know, &c.*: Here we have a reference to the Old Testament law, that a murderer must die, but the words of the law are spiritualized and applied to the true, higher life. In a murderer eternal life has no place.

16. *Hereby perceive we the love of God*: "Hereby have we recognized love." [The words "of God" are not found in any of the old MSS. The lit. translation is, "Hereby we know love, because," &c.: i.e. Christ's laying down his life for us enables us to see what the nature of the true and highest love really is.]

17. The highest manifestation of brotherly love, and this is required even of us, is the surrender of life. How much more then must it be required of those who desire to love God that they should not withhold the necessities of life from their brethren!—[*Bowels of compassion*: better, "heart." Or we may render, "and hardeneth his heart against him." Comp. note on Phil. 7.]

18. *Word . . . tongue*: This is intended to signify the empty



sound of mere words of love. The double phrase is no doubt simply employed for the sake of the antithesis to *deed . . . truth*.

PART III. iii. 19—v. 12.

iii. 19—24. *The blessed possession of open access to God. The imperative double condition attached to it.*

19. *Hereby*: by the practical brotherly love just mentioned.—[*We know*: four of the oldest MSS. read, “we shall know.”]—*And shall assure our hearts*: i.e. since we recognize in ourselves the possession of this brotherly love.

20. This verse shows the reason why it is so necessary that we should be able to assure or pacify our own hearts before Him. If even our own heart, that is to say, our own conscience enfeebled and confused by sin, condemn us, we must surely expect a far severer sentence from God who is greater, God who is a very different judge from our own heart, and from whom nothing whatever is hidden.

21. The thought of ver. 19 is here recurred to again in connection with the expression used in ver. 20.

22. To the release from judgment is added, as a further ground of rejoicing, the confidence that we receive whatever we ask (of course provided it is asked in the manner indicated in v. 14).—The keeping of the divine commandments is the necessary hypothesis of this blessedness in the Christian. Hence this completes the introduction of the third part of the didactic and hortatory appeal of the Epistle. The substance of this third part is stated beforehand in ver. 23.

23. Practical Christianity is the fulfilment of a double commandment that has been communicated to us, the commandment of faith in the name of Jesus Christ and of love one to another.—*As he gave us commandment*: This refers only to the love which we are commanded to show to one another. It points to the nature and strength of Christian love (comp. iii. 16).

24. The reality of close communion between God and man, which is known by the imparting of his spirit, is entirely dependent upon the fulfilment of this two-fold commandment.—[*Hath given*: strictly, “gave.”]

iv. 1—6. *Warning against the spirit of unbelief.*

1. *Are gone out*: i.e. out of the community of Christ, which they have left or been compelled to leave (ii. 19).

2. *Every spirit that confesseth, &c.*: i.e. Every spirit that confesseth Jesus Christ as him who appeared in the flesh.—A mark is here given whereby we may test the Spirit. It is similar to that given in 1 Cor. xii. 3, but with this difference, that what is here required is not simply the acknowledgment of Jesus, but of a definite doctrine concerning Jesus. As, however, the writer gives in his Epistle such a variety of signs whereby we must manifest the genuineness of our Christianity, his meaning here is, not that this is the sole mark by which the Spirit may be tested, but it is here recommended as the first to be considered in view of the dangers which threaten the church at the hands of the false teachers. They did not regard Jesus as Christ. The divine Redeemer had not, in their view, been made man, but only appeared to be a man, inasmuch as he was only locally united with the person of Jesus. They thus denied an actual appearance in the flesh; so that the death of Jesus could, in their view, have no redeeming power and significance (ii. 2, iv. 10). As this makes the life of the Redeemer, to them, merely an apparent life, the sign of the true spirit required of them is, that they should confess this Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God who has come in the flesh or been made flesh (John i. 14).

3. Read, "And every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God," &c.—After the word *Jesus* we must understand "as him who has been made flesh" [which is added in one of the old and many of the later MSS.]; but the shorter expression actually employed is very emphatic, intimating that the long and short of the Gnostic view is, that it is a rejection of Jesus as the one Redeemer. Herein, therefore, every one has a simple test whereby to distinguish that which, according to ver. 3, is an elimination of the essence of Christianity.

4. No doubt this verse refers to a decisive struggle within the Christian communities (probably most violent in Asia Minor, as we should also infer from the so-called "Ignatian Epistles"), the result of which was, that the Gnostics were obliged to withdraw, and which contributed not a little to the supremacy in the church of the doctrine of the person of Christ, which is



represented by the Johannine writings. The Epistle bears plain marks enough of a victory but recently gained over a serious danger, and it is only when we pay due consideration to this fact that we are able to estimate it at its true value (especially in v. 16, 21). The communities have shown themselves victorious; though, indeed, it is not their victory, but is in truth the victory of him who is with them, and who came that he might destroy the works of the devil (comp. iii. 8).

5. They belong to the world. The subjects of their worthless speech are taken from the world. Hence the world receives them.

6. *We*: i.e. the witnesses who proclaim the faith (in the sense of iv. 2, 3). By examining whether they acknowledge or do not acknowledge, whether they hear or do not hear, the spirit of truth and the spirit of error may be known.

iv. 7—v. 18. *Instruction concerning brotherly love and exhortation to practise it.*

iv. 7—11. *Brotherly love as founded in the love of God.*

7. Love, that is to say all true love, has God for its source. Hence he that loveth is a child of God, one who knoweth God.

8. *Knoweth not God* should be "hath not recognized God."—God's very being is entirely love.

9. *Toward us* should be "among us" [or perhaps, as some render it, "in us," the meaning then being that our spiritual nature is the field of the manifestation of God's love].—The fact that God is love is most evident in the highest manifestation of the Divine love in sending his Son to give us life.

10. *To be* should be "as."—This Divine love is not a love that needs to be called forth by our love; it is a spontaneous love which prepares a propitiatory offering for sinners.

11. This Divine love we have been allowed to experience in ourselves in its highest manifestation. This, then, is the foundation of the duty of love one to another.

iv. 12—18. *Explanation of what is meant by the practice of brotherly love.*

12. Between God and the finite sinful creature there is in the nature of things so vast an interval, that the creature cannot so much as see Him. How could we then suppose that God dwelleth

in us, i.e. that He stands in the most intimate communion with us? And yet there is a perfectly simple way of enjoying this communion with God, namely, through love one to another. Hereby we are not only brought into true and lasting union with God, so that His love is our possession, but in addition to this our love to Him is hereby for ever perfected. Perfect brotherly love implies, as its consequent, perfect love of God.

The following verses are an elucidation of this proposition, setting forth its truth, so that ver. 12 is in fact the theme of vv. 13—18.

13. First of all, the idea of the immanence of God in us is completed. In the first place, we, as loving, dwell in Him who is love. But in that case He also dwells in us. As proof of the reality of this mutual relation, we have the communication (limited at first) of His spirit.

14. In this verse the idea that no one has seen God receives its necessary supplement. We (the apostolic witnesses) have seen Him; that is to say, we have seen the true revelation of God, have seen the Son, and therefore have seen the Father who is in the Son whom He himself sent.

15. Whoever acknowledges our testimony to the divine mission of Jesus as the Son, in him that communion with God is permanently realized.

16. But now it may be asked, What connection has brotherly love with all this? This is what ver. 16 is intended to show. Our spiritual possession in faith and knowledge is the love which God has, and which He has manifested in us. To us God is nothing else than the fulness of love. Consequently, if any one finds his own nature and life in the exercise of love, the result is what is described in vv. 17, 18. In him is manifested the perfection of love (i.e. of love generally, including love to God), in the joyful confidence with which we look for the day of judgment. And we are able to do this because we, like Jesus, though we are in the world, are not of the world.

17. *Herein is our love made perfect, &c.*: "Herein is love perfected in us," &c.

18. *Fear hath torment* should be "Fear brings punishment with it" [lit. "hath punishment"].—If (genuine) love be in us, fear is banished far away, i.e. the fear which trembles before the wrath of God and expects *punishment*.



iv. 19. *Connecting link between the preceding section and that which follows, viz. iv. 20—v. 2.*

From this verse to the end of the Epistle, the writer is engaged in showing how love to God and brotherly love are inseparable, and how the fulfilment of both has its root in belief in Jesus as the Son of God.

19. "Let us love Him, for He first loved us:" an exhortation to return the free love of God.—[The verb is ambiguous in the Greek, and may be rendered either "we love" or "let us love." In addition to this, there is some variation in the MSS. Some of the oldest MSS. omit "him." One reads, "We therefore love (or, "let us love"), for God first loved us."]

#### iv. 20—v. 2.

20. The argument from the invisibility of God is to be understood as follows. The brother is placed by God close to man, as a tangible object of his love. Man cannot leave his brother unnoticed. God himself, on the other hand (apart from faith in the Son), is hidden from man. If, then, man pays no attention to the nearest and most tangible object of his love, is it to be supposed that he loves God, who is hidden from him? The argument is only intelligible on the supposition that what is meant is man not having yet attained the faith in the love of God in Christ, as is shown by the beginning of the verse.—[Of the three oldest MSS., one reads, "How can he love?" &c.; and the two others, "He cannot love," &c.]

21. The fulfilment of love in both directions is moreover an express divine commandment. Here we have an allusion to the summing up of the Law in Matt. xxii. 37—40.

v. 1. The third ground maintained is, that love to the begetter includes love to the begotten—a matter of experience.

2. Finally, the writer sets forth that there is no other mark of the genuineness of love to the children of God, than love to God himself and the keeping of His commandments, inasmuch as love to Him is necessarily carried into effect in the keeping of His commandments (ver. 3).

#### v. 3—5.

The fulfilment of the great two-fold commandment of love is

made possible and easy through faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

4. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and our faith is the victory that hath overcome the world."—The seductions and hindrances which obstruct the fulfilment of the Divine commandments and would make them difficult, are all overcome by him who is begotten of God, and who therefore has the divine and truly spiritual life in himself. The means of this victory is faith, the very existence of which proclaims the victory over the world as a completed fact.

5. Putting this verse in the form of a question, is a means to bring more closely home to the reader this fundamental question of life. It is only faith in Jesus as the Son of God (in the sense of iv. 2) that leads to victory over the world. This assertion is the goal of the discussion concerning the Christian life.

v. 6—12. *Faith in Jesus as the Son of God, who has been manifested in the flesh, established by divine testimony in proof of its fundamental significance.*

6. Read, "This is he that came through water and blood, Jesus the Christ [the best MSS. read "Jesus Christ"]; not in the water alone, but in the water and in the blood."—*This*: i.e. Jesus. Here the statement of his having appeared *in the flesh* is not repeated; but, instead, we have pointed out to us that which proclaims him who has appeared as the deliverer of the world. He came—showing who he was—through water and blood; i.e. by founding two mysteries which free the world from sin. This virtue is in the *baptism*, practised by him through his disciples (John iii. 22, iv. 2), and also in his *sacrificial blood*, which completes in the Lord's Supper the purification begun in baptism (John xiii. 8, 10), and is a fountain of perpetual purification (1 John i. 7). After saying "*This* is he," the writer adds the name of Christ for the sake of emphasis, and also for the sake of adding the epithet *the Christ*, in opposition to the Gnostic view. He is *the Christ*, and not simply the unmeaning form and appearance of the Christ. Emphasis is laid upon the two-fold operation of Jesus as the Redeemer, because the writer desires to supply the number of witnesses required by the Scripture (comp. John viii. 17). These two witnesses, water and



blood, which form the boundaries, so to speak, of the life of the Christian community, appear again in connection with the death of Jesus (John xix. 34). The *Spirit*, however, i.e. the Spirit which Jesus sends into the world as his representative, is the one that has properly the official position of witness, and is the source of all testimony; because the Spirit is truth itself, and hence truth itself and the testimony to the truth proceed from the Spirit.

7, 8. Read, "For there are three that bear witness, the Spirit and the water and the blood, and these three are at one."—The words from *in heaven* to *on earth* must be removed from the text as an acknowledged interpolation, as even Luther recognized. They are a feeble and unintelligent marginal note, which has been inserted in the text in the interest of the doctrine of the Trinity. Their only effect is to break the context. The purpose of the writer is to adduce three witnesses for Jesus as the Christ. The first and proper witness, who is therefore placed at the head of the three, is the Spirit (of Christ). To this are added, however, the water and the blood, with their purifying power, which is itself indeed communicated by the working of the Spirit (John iii. 5, vi. 54, 63). Hence the three witnesses cannot but agree together.

9. We accept the (two-fold or three-fold) testimony of men, and how much more must we do this with the greater divine testimony! But the testimony of God is itself this three-fold testimony: Spirit, water and blood.

10. *Record* should be "testimony."—The believer has the testimony in himself, inasmuch as he has in himself the Spirit, and therewith the operation of the water and the blood in him. He must therefore feel confident of his cause, having an inner confidence in faith. Not to believe in this testimony is equivalent to being guilty of the senseless offence of desiring to make God a liar.

11, 12. *Record*: "testimony."—The significance of the divine testimony is here explained further. It is testimony to the fact that God has given us eternal life, and that this life is only to be found in the Son. Hence verse 12 contains the culmination of the apostolic appeal which has been tending from i. 1—4 to this point. To have the Son or not to have the Son is life or death.

## CONCLUSION. v. 13—21.

v. 13. *The purpose which the writer has set before himself.*

13. Read, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life as the believers, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." [The words, "that believe on the name of the Son of God," and, "and that ye may believe," are not found in the oldest MSS.]—The writer here declares the purpose that he has in view. He desires to confirm and to preserve in their faith those who already believe in the name of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. This desire to preserve them in their faith leads him to the two-fold concluding exhortation.

v. 14—17. *No prayer for those who sin unto death!*

14, 15. Comp. iii. 21, 22. Repetition of one of the earlier thoughts of the Epistle. Here it has no independent significance, but only serves to introduce what follows. Faith brings joyful confidence (13), which finds its chief expression in relation to prayer, in the certainty that it will be fully heard.

15. *Desired* should be "have asked."

16. *And he shall give, &c.*, should be, "And He will give life to such as sin not unto death" [lit. "give him life to those that," &c., i.e. answer his prayer by giving life to those that sin not unto death].—*I do not say, &c.*: "For this I do not say that he shall pray." [So giving the emphasis on *this*, which is given by the order of words in the Greek.]—Prayer is not to be employed universally. Intercession for brethren, i.e. for the members of the community with which we are here concerned, is not to be offered in all cases. It must not be made in case of *mortal sin*. Commentators have been sorely exercised about this sin. The meaning is remarkably simple. The whole Epistle is a warning against anti-christianity, the denial of Jesus as having been manifested in the flesh, the denial of the Father and of the Son (iv. 1—4, ii. 18 sqq., esp. 22, 23). This, and nothing else, is to the writer a *sin unto death*, inasmuch as it breaks off the connection with the fountain of life. Every kind of communion must be cut off if its deepest expression in intercession for a fallen brother is strictly forbidden, and the intercession itself, otherwise universally effective, is declared fruitless. We see



what a degree of tension there was between the contending parties, in consequence, no doubt, of the violence of the struggle, and how even the most powerful minds were unable to be just to the hated opponent. The opponent is regarded simply as a child of the devil (ver. 19).

17. Two truths the reader must equally cherish. First, the very smallest transgression is sin (in the full sense of iii. 4), and therefore may not be lightly committed. But, secondly, there is a sin which does not end hopelessly in death, and from which a return to salvation is possible.

v. 18—21. *Warning against false gods.*

The intentional three-fold repetition of the words *we know* is intended to emphasize the certainty of the possession of salvation. Many times, in the course of his Epistle, the writer has adduced the certainty of salvation in order to excite his readers to the preservation of this possession. Now, in conclusion, he again does this with peculiar emphasis.

18. *Sinneth not*: His actions do not partake of sin. He is not in the service of sin. His attention is given to the preservation of himself, and in this he cannot fail. The evil one [so, lit., not *that* wicked one] has no power over him. A bold statement of the Christian certainty of victory over sin.

19. The world is in the power of Satan. We, on the other hand, belong to God.—[The Greek here is ambiguous, and may mean either “lieth in wickedness” or “lieth in the evil one,” i.e. in the power of the evil one; but the latter is the more probable, as “the evil one” has just been spoken of in ver. 18, and the contrast here is between the world which is *his*, and the Christian believers who are God’s.]

20. Read, “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we know the true God, and that we are in the true God through the mediation of His Son Jesus Christ,” &c.—[The readings of the MSS. vary considerably in this verse. The reading of Tischendorf, for which there is the most MS. evidence, is, “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we know Him that is true; and we are in Him that is true, in His Son Jesus Christ” (i.e. inasmuch as we are in His Son Jesus Christ; comp. John xvii. 21—23: “Even as thou Father art in me, and

I in thee, that they also may be in us . . . . I in them and thou in me," &c.).]—*This*: i.e. the God who is imparted to us through Christ.—*The true God* (comp. v. 6), in opposition to the false gods (ver. 21). The true God is for us eternal life. What can the false gods give to you? Beware of them!

21. *Idols* should be "false gods." What is meant by "false gods"? The words have a distinct reference to the passage immediately preceding, and indeed to the whole Epistle. Those who deny the Son have not the Father. To them the place of the true God is taken by phantoms, or false gods. It needs no explanation to show how admirably this agrees with the double series of heavenly powers which the Gnostics believed in. It is not likely that there would be any necessity to warn readers in the second century against taking part in heathen idol worship, and at any rate there is nothing to connect such a warning with the rest of the Epistle.



## THE SECOND EPISTLE OF JOHN.

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THE ancient church was not certain whether the Second Epistle of John should be included in the canon or not. It is possible that the reason of this doubt was, that the contents of the Epistle did not seem to be of sufficient importance, or because it has the appearance of being merely a private letter. For the most part it was regarded as a production of the apostle, though there were some who considered that it was from the hand of the presbyter John. Strict internal criticism shows us that it stands in a position of dependence upon the First Epistle, of such a nature as to exclude identity of authorship. The style, while departing widely from that of the First Epistle in certain expressions (*the doctrine of Christ*, ver. 9; *to bring this doctrine*, ver. 10; and especially the designation of the confession of Christ as a *commandment*, ver. 6), yet appears to be borrowed, with the thoughts, from the First Epistle. The epistolary form is more carefully retained than in the First Epistle, but artificially and laboriously (vv. 1, 12 sq.; see notes).

The purpose of this short writing is clear. In unmistakable connection with the First Epistle, here and there with verbal imitation of it, the writer desires to impress upon the believers, the children of the community, the necessity of a strict separation from the Gnostic sectaries, in order that the community of the Lord may be kept clean. The apostle John is introduced as the writer of the Epistle at the very beginning, under the name of the *presbyter* (see note). If the person who is known to us under the name of the presbyter John had been intended

here, or had really written the Epistle himself, the name John would not have been omitted. It would have been too presumptuous for him to call himself simply "the presbyter;" and besides, considering the evident imitation of the First Epistle both in form and substance, it would have been ambiguous and liable to be misunderstood. The recipient of the Epistle appears as a lady of the name of Kyria [see note on ver. 1]. That was undoubtedly a woman's name in common use; but the contents of the Epistle are such as would be addressed, not to an individual or to a family, but to a community. Hence some of the early Fathers have instinctively and rightly understood that the recipient is intended to represent a community, or perhaps the whole community of Christendom. The name *Kyria* signifies "lady." It is the feminine form of *Kyrios*, "lord." It stands for the community whose "children" the writer desires to guard against being led astray, those children who have been confided to her by the Lord, with which idea the epithet *elect* (ver. 1) agrees admirably (comp. 1 Pet. v. 13). This supposition explains also the greeting from the "sister's children" (ver. 13), in so far, that is to say, as one may understand the community to be an individual community rather than the whole community of Christendom; not, however, any definite one in particular, but each of the existing communities.



## THE SECOND EPISTLE OF JOHN.

### 1—3. *Salutation.*

The resemblance to the First Epistle is sufficient to show that the writer is supposed to be the apostle John. He is represented as an old man, still, like a father, taking upon himself the care of his communities, and even the individual members of them, with glowing love, and as provided with an authority which is unique in its way. That is to say, he is represented just as John appears in the traditions of the post-apostolic age. With these two ideas of his age and his authority, agrees well the epithet *elder* [Gr. *presbyter*], without further explanation. His is so prominent a figure that there is no need to mention his name. The word *elder* is used in the second and third of the Johannine Epistles in a comprehensive sense, so as to include even the apostles. It designates great men of leading and authority in the church.

1. Read, "The elder unto the elect Kyria and her children whom I love in truth," &c.—The epithet *elect* is best understood on the hypothesis that Kyria is a figurative name for the community of the Lord (*Kyrios*). [Comp. Introd. p. 211.]

2. Read, "For the sake of the truth which dwelleth among us; and may it be with us for ever!" [There is no MS. authority for this reading of the second clause. All the MSS. have, "and shall be with us for ever."]—It should be noticed how even in the opening salutation *the truth* is emphasized as having its dwelling fixed in the community, and being for ever firmly established, and also that Jesus Christ is already spoken of here as "the Son of the Father" (ver. 3).

3. [*Grace be with you, mercy and peace, &c.*: The oldest MSS. read, "There shall be with us grace, mercy, peace," &c.]—*Peace* = salvation.—*In truth and love*: These should constitute the element in which you live; peace being placed first.

4—11. *Warning and general directions in regard to the Gnostics who have withdrawn from the Christian community.*

4. *I found*: John is represented as giving the results of a visitation, and as having a fresh visitation in prospect (ver. 12). He gives prominence to the satisfactory side of his visit, simply hinting at the less satisfactory by the little word *of* (i.e. some of) thy children.—*Walking in truth* is erroneously taken to mean Christian conduct, and then the *commandment from the Father* is interpreted as love. What the writer means is, rather, walking in the doctrine of the church as divine truth (comp. ver. 9). To walk thus is called a divine commandment, probably with reference to 1 John iv. 1—6, as ver. 5 refers to 1 John ii. 7, iii. 11. The children of the mother church already stand in the truth (comp. 1 John iv. 4); but they are admonished (as in the First Epistle) unto brotherly love.

5. Read, "And now I beseech thee Kyria (not writing it unto thee as a new commandment, but as one that we had from the beginning) that we love one another."

6. From the exhortation in ver. 5 the writer passes on, somewhat artificially, to the corresponding exhortation to adhere steadfastly to the truth, i.e. to the ecclesiastical doctrine concerning Christ, for which he finds support in 1 John v. 3. The (true) love (no longer simply brotherly love) is walking according to God's commandments (an un-Johannine expression). Then a commandment is straightway produced with the words, *This is the commandment*, &c. Then this commandment is described as one that has been impressed upon the Christians from the beginning; in which again there is probably an allusion to the First Epistle (comp. 1 John iii. 23), and perhaps also to the Fourth Gospel (e.g. John vi. 29, 40).

7. Read, "For many deceivers are gone out into the world, who confess not Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist."—Instead of directly saying what the commandment is in which they should walk, the writer calls attention to the deceivers who refuse to acknowledge the coming in the flesh, and who therefore have not the true doctrine concerning Christ, and so have gone out from the Christian community. The readers are warned against them as against the representatives of anti-Christianity (vv. 7, 8).



[8. Two of the oldest MSS. read, "Look to yourselves that you lose not the things which ye have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward."]

9. Read, "Whosoever transgresseth (the commandment) and abideth not in the doctrine concerning Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine concerning Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." [Instead of *Whosoever transgresseth*, the three oldest MSS. have "Whosoever goeth forward," or, as some render it, "Whosoever taketh the lead."—The same MSS. omit *of Christ* in the second half of the verse.]—Here the writer speaks of transgression of a commandment, and the context shows incontrovertibly that the ecclesiastical doctrine is regarded as a divine commandment. It is the commandment to which attention is called in ver. 6.—*Hath not God*, is an expression which indicates some other writer than the author of the First Epistle.—*He hath both*, connects this Epistle with 1 John ii. 23.

10, 11. *Neither bid him God speed, for he that biddeth him God speed, &c.*: "Neither greet him, for he that greeteth him," &c.—On these verses the whole Epistle turns. No manner of fellowship with apostates! No kind of assistance must be offered to those who have departed from the fellowship of the Christian community. This rule is fully explained by the rupture that had followed the serious contests in the church.—The *evil deeds* are probably not so much immoral conduct with which the adversaries are charged, as the wasting of the community by false doctrines. Those who had gone out could not fail to endeavour to draw others after them.

#### 12, 13. Conclusion.

12. This indication of the more cordial method of direct interchange of thoughts is intended to give the Epistle a warmer tone. So also is the concluding phrase of the verse, borrowed from 1 John i. 4.

[13. See Introd. p. 211.]

## THE THIRD EPISTLE OF JOHN.

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IN regard to this short writing, as in the case of the preceding one, the ancient church was in doubt whether it properly belonged to the collection of Scriptures. Probably the grounds of doubt also were the same as in the case of the Second Epistle. For the most part, however, it was acknowledged as Johannine, which was very natural, considering its resemblance to the two other Epistles. Internal criticism shows that the Third Epistle is a somewhat poor and feeble imitation of the Second, and that it is consequently not likely to be by the same writer (comp. 3 John 1 with 2 John 1; 3 John 3 with 2 John 4; and especially 3 John 13, 14, with 2 John 12). An imitation by a later hand is further indicated by the awkward application of John xxi. 24, this testimony in favour of John being here put into his own mouth (ver. 12).

The object of the Epistle is to exhort the communities, and especially the rulers, to assist the evangelists and to support them hospitably. The warning example of Diotrephes indicates insolent ill-treatment on the part of some rulers of communities, who in their self-seeking even went so far as to treat the evangelists themselves, the wandering missionaries, with hostility. For this exhortation the Second Epistle offered itself to the writer, as already suitable in a slightly altered form. The presbyter remains. In place of Kyria we find Gaius, a name of good reputation which appears frequently in the early traditions, so that we may suppose that the name of Demetrius (ver. 12) is also taken from the same source, while Diotrephes (like Alexander



the smith, 2 Tim. iv. 14, comp. 1 Tim. i. 20, 2 Tim. ii. 17) appears to have been a traditional type of avarice. Gaius is represented as the recipient of the Epistle, because the exhortation appeals to the willingness of certain highly-esteemed members of the community to do their duty in regard to the matter of which it treats.

## THE THIRD EPISTLE OF JOHN.

### 1, 2. *Greeting and good wishes.*

1. *The elder*: see note on 2 John 1.—*In the truth* should be “in truth.”

2. *Above all things*: i.e. most particularly. Not, as some take it, “over (i.e. concerning) all things.”

3—12. *Encouragement to the exercise of hospitality towards evangelists, and warning against harsh and hostile treatment of them.*

3. Borrowed from 2 John 4. Here, however, *walking in the truth* [strictly, “in truth,” as in ver. 1 and 2 John 4] has a different meaning from what it has there, and simply signifies truly Christian conduct.

5, 6. Read, “Beloved, thou actest in true Christian fashion [lit. “doest a faithful thing”] in all thy labours [lit. “that which thou doest”] for the brethren, and especially for strangers. And they have testified to thy love before the community; and thou wilt do well if thou further them in a manner worthy of God.”

6. “Worthy of God:” their work is God’s work, inasmuch as they are exercising the calling of preachers of the gospel to the heathen (comp. ver. 7).

7. *His name’s sake* should be “the name’s sake” [so all the old MSS.]. “The name,” without any distinctive epithet, is the name in which salvation lies contained, i.e. the name of Jesus Christ which they proclaim.

8. Read, “It is our duty, therefore, to support such,” &c.—In this verse the writer states plainly the proper object of his Epistle, viz. to encourage the support of the evangelists, especially by showing them hospitality. This is required as a Christian duty, and it is recommended by the consideration that in so doing we co-operate in the dissemination of the truth.

9. *Diotrephes*, &c.: i.e. Diotrephes, who lays claim to rule among them, pays no attention to us.—Here the writer explains



why he has taken the step of writing a private letter. The epistle which he had addressed to the church, Diotrephes has been guilty of rejecting. This is a literary artifice adopted by the writer in order that, in the person of this ruler of a community (bearing a name of bad reputation in the traditions of the church), who ambitiously carries out his own evil purposes, he may expose abuses of this kind which had crept into the Christian communities.

10. *I will remember his deeds* should be "I will remonstrate with him concerning his deeds."—*Malicious words*: Probably the letters of recommendation with which such evangelists were provided were often rejected with surly, insulting words. Not only did the community itself fail to provide for such guests, but even when individual members of the community desired to take charge of them and assist them, they were discouraged, and obstacles were put in the way of their so doing.—*And casteth them out of the church*: There seem to have been cases in which the evangelists were driven out of the community altogether, perhaps from fear lest their activity should involve the community in danger and persecution. We cannot suppose that those who received such travelling brethren into their houses were themselves expelled from the community, though this is the meaning attached to these words by commentators almost without exception.

11. *Follow not*: i.e. "imitate not."—The example of Diotrephes is held up to Gaius as a warning. Testimony is borne to the brilliant example of Demetrius, on the other hand (ver. 12), in regard to this very duty of Christian hospitality.

12. Read, "Demetrius hath the witness of all, and of the truth itself; and we also bear witness, and thou knowest that our witness is true."—*The truth itself* could not fail to give the best testimony if it were called.

#### 13—15. Conclusion:

This is evidently a feeble imitation of the conclusion of the Second Epistle. The want of any actual historical bearing in the Epistle is concealed under the request to greet the friends each by name, as if each had been expressly mentioned in the Epistle.

[13. *Pen*: lit. "reed."]

14. *By name*: i.e. each one by his or her own name.

## THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

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THIS Epistle purports to have been written by Jude (or Judas), the brother of Jesus, and is addressed to Christendom in general. But the contents and the historical allusions of the Epistle indicate a late post-apostolic age as the date of its composition, when the ecclesiastical movement for the exclusion of the Gnostic heretics was on foot.

The Epistle is devoted to the confutation of false teachers, who can only be Gnostics of the free-thinking school. They exalt themselves even above the God and the angels of the Old Testament as subordinate powers (vv. 8, 10), above Jesus as only the human vehicle of the higher Christ (ver. 4), and above the ordinary Christians as simply psychical men (i.e. possessed of a soul only), as though they themselves alone were the spiritual men (ver. 19). They were Gnostics, however, not of the school that was hostile to the flesh, but of the libertine (free-thinking) school (comp. vv. 4, 8, 10, 16, 18). These libertine Gnostics appear still in the Christian community (ver. 12), but as a dissatisfied section (or even faction), at variance to some extent with the governing body, and conscious of being slighted (vv. 12, 16, 19). The author of the Epistle, who is not the brother of Jesus, but a writer of about A.D. 150, probably of the Eastern church, demands a suppression of this heresy, partly by gentle means, and partly with a certain violence, and partly by the middle course of a discriminating forgiveness (vv. 22, 23). Similarly he exhorts his readers to retain the faith that has been delivered to them (vv. 3, 20). The Epistle of Jude is not known



in the ancient church until the end of the second century, and even then it was not universally acknowledged.

In regard to the attitude and position of the writer himself, we can only say that he is a champion of the traditional ecclesiastical faith against the heretical teachers whom he describes, and that he was well acquainted with the extra-biblical Jewish literature, the Book of Enoch, which he quotes as holy Scripture (vv. 14, 15), and the Assumption of Moses, which he makes use of in ver. 9. His zeal against the Gnostic heresy, fiery as it is, is tempered by a certain evangelical mildness (vv. 22, 23).

After the address (1, 2), the occasion of the composition is stated, namely, the dangerous heresy of libertine Gnosticism (3, 4). The mention of divine judgment (5—7) leads the way to a description of these heretics (8—16), and then the orthodox Christians are shown how they must conduct themselves with regard to them (17—23). The short Epistle then closes with a doxology (24, 25).

## THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

### 1, 2. *Salutation.*

1. Read, "Judas, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, unto the called that are beloved in God and preserved in [or "for"] Jesus Christ."—*Brother of James*: i.e. one of the brothers of Jesus (comp. Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3).

### 3, 4. *Occasion of the Epistle.*

3. Read, "Beloved, when I was taking all diligent care to write to you concerning our common salvation," &c.—*Once* = "once for all."

4. *Denying the only Lord God*, &c., should be "denying the only Master, our Lord Jesus Christ."—Here it is already indicated that the opponents of the traditional faith are free-thinking Gnostics, who deny the only God of the universe and Jesus Christ (comp. ver. 25), and turn Christian grace into an abandoned life. The denial of Jesus Christ is not to be understood as if the false teachers refused to recognize Jesus as Christ in any way; in that case they would not be Christian heretics at all. The meaning must be (as in 1 John ii. 22), that they distinguished in Gnostic fashion between the personality of Jesus and the personality of Christ.

### 5—7. *Warning judgments of God from the earliest ages.*

5. Read, "I wish to remind you, as you know all these things, once for all, that the Lord having saved a people out of Egypt, a second time destroyed them that believed not."—The words "a second time" contain an implied back reference to the deluge, when the unbelievers were destroyed for the first time (comp. 1 Pet. i. 20; 2 Pet. ii. 5). After the migration from Egypt, God destroyed in the wilderness the people who had been delivered (comp. Num. xiv. 35 sq.).

6. Read, "And the angels which kept not their own dominion,



but left their own habitation, he hath kept unto the judgment of the great day in everlasting chains under darkness."

7. *In like manner*: i.e. like the angels referred to in ver. 6, who formed connections with the daughters of men (Gen. vi. 1 sqq.).—*Strange* (lit. "another") *flesh*: i.e. were guilty of unnatural sins.

#### 8—16. *The false teachers.*

8. Read, "Similarly these also, dreaming, defile the flesh:" a reference to lascivious dreams (comp. Is. lvi. 10).—The despising of *dominion* is the degrading of the "Lord" (i.e. the God of the Old Testament) to the rank of a subordinate divine being.—*And speak evil of dignities* should be "and rail at glories." These "glories" are the high angels of the God of the Old Testament, which the Gnostics judged in a manner corresponding to their judgment of God.

9. *Accusation* should be "judgment."

10. [*Speak evil* should be "blaspheme" or "rail against:" same word as in vv. 8, 9.]—The Gnostic false teachers of the free-thinking school rail against the higher things which they know not (but think they know). In lower material things which they know, however, they perish.

11. Read, "Woe unto them! For they went in the way of Cain, and surrendered themselves to the error of Balaam for the sake of reward, and perished in the rebellion of Korah."

12. Read, "These are rocks in your love-feasts, feasting with you, pasturing themselves without fear; clouds without water carried away by the wind; autumnal trees without fruit, twice dead and rooted up."—It seems that the false teachers still take part in the Christian love-feasts, but they "pasture themselves," i.e. they separate themselves from the lawful shepherd or bishop.

13. The "wandering stars for which the blackness of darkness hath been reserved for ever" remind us of the Book of Enoch, in which seven stars of heaven are chained together for punishment (xxi. 2), and fallen stars (lxxxvi. 1 sq., lxxxviii. 1, xc. 21) appear in punishment.

14, 15. *Enoch also the seventh from Adam*: comp. Gen. v. 21.—[*Cometh with ten thousands of his saints*: strictly, "came with (or amid) his holy myriads."]—The passage here quoted is to be

found in the Ethiopic Book of Enoch i. 9: "And behold he cometh with myriads of his holy ones to pass judgment upon them, and to destroy the wicked, and to punish all flesh<sup>†</sup> for all that the sinners and ungodly have done and committed against him."

16. This discontented grumbling and arrogant speech, with the expression in ver. 12, "pasturing themselves," points to dissatisfaction with their position in the community. The false teachers who gave themselves out to be spiritual men (ver. 19), and uttered great-swelling speeches, found themselves passed over and disregarded.—*Having men's persons in admiration, &c.* "Having respect of persons for the sake of advantage."

17—23. *The attitude of the orthodox Christians towards the false teachers.*

17, 18. These prophetic utterances on the part of the apostles may be found in Rev. ii. iii.; 2 Thess. ii. 3 sq., iv. 3.—*Of the apostles* should be "by the apostles."

19. Read, "These are they who make separations, having a soul, not having a spirit."—The Gnostic teachers exalted themselves, as the spiritual men, over the ordinary Christians, as merely psychic men (animated simply by a soul and not by the spirit). The writer here exactly reverses this.

20. *Holy Ghost*: "Holy Spirit."

22, 23. Read, "And on some have mercy when they are in doubt, and some save snatching them out of the fire. On some, however, have mercy in fear, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."—The followers of the false teachers are to be treated with gentleness if they are simply in doubt. Others are to be snatched from the fire of destruction; to others again mercy is to be shown "with fear," i.e. with care. The garment spotted by the flesh is explained by ver. 8. The immoral life of the false teachers is to be regarded with the uttermost hatred. [There is a considerable variation in the readings of the MSS., and some difference of opinion as to the proper translation of these two verses. Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford and Tregelles, supported throughout by two of the oldest MSS., and in the greater part by others also, read, "And some convict when they are at variance (i.e. "contending with you," Alf.), and others save,



snatching them out the fire, and on some have mercy with fear," &c.]

24, 25. *Conclusion.*

[24. There is one old MS. that reads "them" instead of *you* in this verse.]

25. Read, "To the only God our Saviour, honour and majesty before all eternity, and now and unto all eternity."—"To the only God" (comp. ver. 4), in opposition to the many divine beings which the Gnostics set forth.—*God* as our *Saviour*: comp. 1 Tim. i. 1, ii. 3; Tit. i. 3, ii. 10, iii. 4—[Here, again, there is some difference of opinion as to the correct reading. Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford and Tregelles, supported by the four oldest MSS., read, "To the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, glory, majesty, dominion and power, before every age, and now and unto all the ages."]

# THE REVELATION OF JOHN.

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## 1. OCCASION AND PURPOSE OF THE BOOK.

THE New Testament contains one prophetic book, the Apocalypse. This Greek word signifies a revelation, or uncovering, and was used by the later Jews to denote especially the glorious appearance of the Messiah coming from the right hand of God, which they expected. Hence it came about that the name was applied not only to the appearance of the Messiah, but to any writing that treated of it, and such a writing was called simply an Apocalypse. The earliest composition of this kind is the Old Testament Book of Daniel, which, however, was not written by a prophet of that name living at the Babylonian court, but by an unknown author of the Maccabean age (about 170 B.C.).

That the Revelation of John belongs to the first century after the birth of Christ is beyond all doubt. In that age the whole of Christendom lived in the conviction that Jesus, who had been exalted to heaven, and whom they revered as the Messiah, would return in the immediate future, would raise the dead, hold a judgment over the human race, and then, with his own faithful followers, establish the eternal kingdom of God. With this belief, the roots of which are to be found in Judaism, was connected the idea of the *Messianic woes*, which the Christians likewise appropriated from the Jewish theology. Before the regeneration of all things, which was to begin with the advent of the Messiah, it was expected that there would be great convulsions in heaven and on earth. Then the whole visible creation shall be shaken through and through by the pangs of labour. Sun and moon lose



their brilliancy. The stars fall from heaven. War, tumult, famine and pestilence, fall upon mankind. This period Satan seeks with all his powers to avail himself of, well knowing that now his dominion will speedily come to an end. Not satisfied with stirring up the ungodly world to the persecution of the believers, he even ventures to make himself incarnate in a human personality, even as God became a man in Jesus, and so, as the adversary and caricature of the true Messiah (*antichrist*), to demand divine honours for himself. But in so doing he has reached the summit of his power, for now Christ with his hosts descends from heaven, overcomes the antichrist with all his following, and consigns him to eternal perdition.

A Christian of the second half of the first century, filled with such expectations, watching with attentive eyes the course of the affairs of the world, could not fail to be strengthened in the conviction "that the time was at hand," and "that the Lord would soon come with his reward to give to every man according to his work" (Rev. i. 3, xxii. 12).

The whole of the known world was at that time under the sceptre of the Roman emperor. Two emperors, Tiberius (A.D. 14—37) and Caligula (A.D. 37—41), had already disgraced the throne by unheard-of cruelty and blasphemy; but Nero, who in the year 54 succeeded the feeble Claudius, surpassed in unnatural depravity all his predecessors. During his reign of fourteen years, his mother, his step-brother, two wives and innumerable other persons, fell a sacrifice to his brutality. He excited the detestation of the Christians especially by the terrible persecution to which he subjected them. In the year 64, the greater part of the city of Rome was destroyed by fire. The popular voice boldly declared that the tyrant himself was the originator of the fire, and all his endeavours to prove this rumour false were in vain. At last he declared that the Christians living in Rome were the real authors of the fire, and caused a great number of them to be hunted out and put to a martyr's death. From that time, the name of Rome was as hateful to the Christians as the

name of Babylon had been to the Jews after they had been carried away out of the Holy Land into captivity there. Earnestly did the confessors of Jesus now long for the day when the judgment of the Lord should come upon this infamous and idolatrous city.

That this day could not now be far distant, might be inferred, it was supposed, from another sign of the times. In the year 66, the Jews, unable any longer to endure the tyranny of the Roman governor, armed themselves and began a bloody war against their oppressors. It was impossible, however, for any heroism to succeed in so unequal a struggle, and after many thousand Jews had fallen in a numerous succession of encounters, the Roman general Vespasian advanced against Jerusalem, with the intention of taking the chief city of the enemy and so making an end of the war. It may easily be understood that Jews and Jewish Christians alike watched the siege of Jerusalem with feverish anxiety. The idea that it was possible that God should deliver up to the Gentiles the holy city and the temple dedicated to his honour, was intolerable to them. The Jewish Christians comforted themselves with the hope that perhaps He had only threatened the Israelites with this severe visitation in order to move the hardened people to repentance and faith in the gospel, and that when this purpose was attained He would undoubtedly stretch forth His saving hand, and with the thunders of His judgment dash to pieces the Gentiles who had sought to lay sacrilegious hands upon the sanctuary.

Ere long another rumour spread through the Roman empire, which was peculiarly adapted to dispel the last doubts and to make it plain that the Lord stood already at the door. The armies in Gaul and Spain had rebelled against Nero and proclaimed their well-tried general Galba as emperor. Betrayed in his own palace, and too cowardly to resist, Nero fled from the capital to the country estate of one of his freed-men, and, when his pursuers approached, stabbed himself in the throat with the assistance of one of his servants. Such was the account given



of his death, but as it took place in secret the question soon arose whether this monster of cruelty was really dead; whether he had not simply hidden away in order to gather new strength and then turn again upon his enemies, breathing revenge and slaughter. By-and-by the mound under which he was said to rest was found repeatedly adorned with fresh flowers. His image was set up on the public rostra, with decrees bearing his name and threatening his speedy return and the severest punishment of his enemies. Gradually the vague suspicions as to his actual place of concealment took a definite form. It had before been prophesied that if he should be one day hurled from the imperial throne, he should hold dominion over the East. And after the rebellion arose he still cherished the intention of taking refuge among the Parthians beyond the river Euphrates. Hence the report naturally arose that he had actually carried out this design, and that he would very shortly return with an innumerable host of these hereditary enemies of Rome, and wreak terrible vengeance on the imperial city. It is easy to understand how this report found ready acceptance among the Christians. The horrible cruelties practised by Nero upon the confessors of Jesus were themselves sufficient ground for regarding him as the incarnate antichrist. If he was able to defy death itself, there must without doubt be some superhuman Satanic power at work in him. In addition to all this, during the preceding decades the Messianic woes had become louder and more unmistakable. The Roman empire had been disturbed incessantly with bloody wars, first in one quarter and then in another. A famine had visited Judea. A pestilence had laid Italy waste, and in Rome itself had carried away thirty thousand persons. Terrible devastations had been caused by earthquakes, which had been felt with especial severity in Asia Minor, where out of the seven cities named in the opening of the Revelation (i. 11), only two, viz. Smyrna and Pergamos, had escaped.

Finally, the belief that the return of Jesus would take place in the immediate future was further confirmed by the declarations

of the Book of Daniel, which, dealing as it did almost entirely with the Messianic age, was more industriously read by the ancient Christians than any other book of the Old Testament. According to the prophecies of this book, the oppressions which fell upon the Jewish nation, and the God-forsaken state in which it was left under the tyranny of the Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes, were to endure for "a time and times and half a time," that is to say, according to the most simple and natural interpretation, three and a half years (Dan. vii. 25, xii. 7); but this period had long since passed, and yet the affliction of Israel had not come to an end. If, however, the author of the Book of Daniel was a genuine prophet possessed by the spirit of God, then his prophecy must be fulfilled in some way or other. A different explanation was therefore sought. The saying in question was interpreted as applying to the new "people of the covenant," the Christian community, which had taken the place of the old people of the covenant; and the "times" were regarded, not as single years, but as periods of ten years each, just as Daniel elsewhere speaks of "weeks," meaning periods of seven years and not of seven days (Dan. ix. 24 sqq.). In this case the prophecy could only refer to the latter part of the seventh decade of the Christian era, which was just three and a half decades after the crucifixion of Jesus, with which the forsaking and the oppressions of the Christians had begun.

Such, generally speaking, were the ideas of the author of the Revelation; and it was the desire to confer a benefit upon other Christians by communicating to them the result of his own careful consideration of the signs of the time, which led him to write his book. Accordingly, the purpose of the book is to instruct the Christian communities of Asia Minor, and indirectly the whole of Christendom, concerning the return of the Lord and the events which were to precede it, to strengthen them for the impending sufferings and afflictions by calling attention to the glory of the Messianic kingdom, and to admonish them to put away the moral offences which still clung to them, that



the Lord at his coming to receive his own might find them well prepared, and vouchsafe to them participation in his kingdom.

## 2. CONTENTS.

The disclosures which John makes to his readers may be summed up somewhat as follows: We are already living in the last times, and ere long the period assigned by the Book of Daniel will have passed. But there are still many things that must first happen. Terrible plagues will visit the Christ-hating human race, and only the elect will be spared. The defiant pride of the hardened Gentile world these plagues will fail indeed to break down, but surely the Jewish people, after the Romans have conquered all Jerusalem except the Temple itself, will by these judgments of God be terrified out of their false security and yield to the gospel. The Christian community will be sorely oppressed by Satan and his ministers, but it will be marvellously preserved by the Divine protection. On the other hand, the impious imperial capital, the idolatrous Rome, with her hatred of the Christians, must vanish from the face of the earth; and her own former ruler, Nero, who was supposed to be dead, and who shall come hastening with the princes of the Parthians from his concealment beyond the Euphrates, is the very one who is destined to execute this terrible sentence upon her. After this he will manifest himself as the incarnate antichrist by demanding divine honours for himself, slaying with the sword all who refuse to grant them, and drawing after him an innumerable horde of hireling admirers and blasphemers. Lying prophets, both among Jews and Gentiles, with deceitful words and astounding magic arts, will win over a great part of the inhabitants of the earth to the side of the antichrist, excite him to a bloody persecution of the faithful disciples of the true Messiah, and collect around him as his allies the princes of all the nations that are subject to the Romans. Thus prepared, he attacks the holy city of Jerusalem; but in the neighbourhood of the city his destiny overtakes him, for Christ comes with his

hosts from heaven, destroys the hostile army in a bloody battle, and consigns the antichrist, with his lying prophets, to the sulphurous pit which is prepared for all the wicked. Then the victorious Messiah calls to life again those who have been slain for his name's sake, in order that he may rule peacefully with them for a long series of years in Jerusalem. After this, barbarian hordes, stirred up by Satan, will lay siege to the holy city in numberless multitudes; but they will be quickly destroyed by the direct intervention of God. When Satan has been similarly cast into the sulphurous pit, the old order of the world terminates with the resurrection of all the dead and the final judgment. Heaven and earth are marvellously renewed, and in the new Jerusalem, that descends from heaven, the eternal kingdom of God and Christ begins.

These revelations are made by the seer to his readers, however, not in insipid, didactic discourses, but in the form of visions, in which a series of symbolic figures, representing the important powers in the development of the last days, passes before his eyes. As this is the traditional form for all apocalyptic writings, a form which suggested itself irresistibly to John from the very first, the question whether he actually saw all the visions which he describes must be answered in the negative. They are the images, rather, of a powerful imagination. He believed in them only in the same degree in which a dramatist believes in the creations of his own mind. Both alike believe in the reality of the ideas which they present in a symbolic and allegoric, i.e. in a poetic, dress.

The symbolic figures which we meet with in the Revelation are the following:

1. The *Messiah* appears as a high-priest (i. 13 sqq.), and afterwards as a slaughtered lamb, with seven horns and seven eyes (v. 6, after Is. liii. 7); as a new-born man child, who shall pasture all the Gentiles with a rod of iron (xii. 5, after Ps. ii. 7 sqq.); as the son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven (xiv. 14, and comp. also i. 13, after Dan. vii. 13); and, finally, as a general



hastening to victory and arrayed as for a Roman triumph (vi. 2, xix. 11).

2. The *community of God* is represented as a woman adorned with the sun and moon and a crown of twelve stars, from whom the Messiah springs (ch. xii.), but who is also the bride of the Messiah (xix. 7 sq., xxi. 9 sqq., xxii. 17).

3. *Satan* is represented (after Gen. iii. 1 sqq.) as a serpent or dragon with seven heads and ten horns (xii. 3 sqq.).

4. The *power of the world*, i.e. the *Roman empire*, which is in Satan's service, appears (after Dan. vii. 3 sqq.) as a beast having likewise seven heads and ten horns (xiii. 1 sqq.); the *city of Rome*, which rules over this empire, as a meretricious woman enthroned upon the beast.

5. *The antichrist*, Nero, inasmuch as all the godlessness and all the hostility to the Christians that was contained in the Roman empire had been incorporated in him, is represented by the beast above mentioned (xi. 7, xvii. 8, 11), and also, inasmuch as he was the fifth Roman emperor, by the fifth head of this beast (xiii. 3, xvii. 9 sq.).

6. The whole body of *false prophets* of that age, both Jewish and Gentile, appears in the form of a second beast, in league with the first, like to a lamb in appearance, but speaking like a serpent (xiii. 11 sqq.). In other passages the false prophet appears without disguise in the place of this beast (xvi. 13, xix. 20, xx. 10).

As regards its general arrangement, the book may be divided into three parts, the Prologue (i.—iii.), the Apocalypse proper (iv.—xxii. 5), and the Epilogue (xxii. 6—21).

The prologue consists of the title and superscription of the whole (i. 1—3), the dedication to the seven Christian communities of Asia Minor (i. 4—8), the introductory vision (i. 9—20), and seven letters to the seven communities (ii. iii.).

The revelation proper is divided into two parts by the change of scene, which is first in heaven, and then (from ch. x. onwards) on earth. It is gradually developed through a number of stages

within a framework, as it were, of the sacred numbers, three and seven. Seven seals are broken; but this is not the immediate prelude, as might be supposed, to the final judgment, for there then follow seven trumpets, the last of which again introduces, not the final judgment, but the seven vials of wrath. Thus we have three sets of seven scenes each in the development of the Revelation, and each set is arranged strictly after the same pattern. The first four scenes are each time most closely connected with one another (vi. 1—7, viii. 7—12, xvi. 1—9); the fifth and sixth hang more loosely together (vi. 9—17, ix., xvi. 10—12), and are separated by intermediate proceedings from the seventh, which is itself introduced in each set of scenes by a somewhat lengthy preparatory development (vii., x. 1—xi. 14, xvi. 13—16). Where the length of the scene allows of sub-divisions, these are formed by means of threes. This is especially marked in the description of the final contest and the judgment. The seventh trumpet introduces three different things: the description of the enemy, the prophetic prelude, and the decisive conflict. There are three enemies: the devil (xii. 3—17), the Roman imperial power (xiii. 1—10), and the false prophets (xiii. 11—17). Three angels announce in the prelude the fall of the imperial capital (xiv. 6—11, 14—20), and the decisive conflict is divided into three scenes (xvii., xix. 11—21, xx. 7—10). Hence the whole arrangement of the Revelation has evidently been thought out and planned with extraordinary care.

### 3. DATE AND PLACE OF COMPOSITION. AUTHORSHIP.

The *date* of the book now under our consideration may be fixed with a certainty seldom attainable in the case of other ancient writings. Evidently it is between June 9th, 68, and August 10th, 70; the former of these being the day of Nero's death, and the latter the day on which the Temple at Jerusalem, which John had hoped to see spared, was reduced to ashes when the city was destroyed by the Romans. And since the sixth emperor, of whom John says that he "is" (xvii. 10), can be no



other than Nero's successor Galba, who was murdered on the 15th of January, 69, the Revelation must have been written within the reign of that emperor, which lasted for a period of rather less than seven months.

The *place* of composition was somewhere in Asia Minor. According to his own statement, the apocalyptic writer was upon the island of Patmos (i. 9), over against Ephesus, and he dedicates his book to the Ephesian and six other communities of Asia Minor, of the position and circumstances of which he has such accurate knowledge as can only result from personal acquaintance. Accordingly, the probability is altogether in favour of the ecclesiastical tradition which represents the Revelation as springing from Ephesus.

The *personality* of the author, then, is the only matter that remains to be determined. - He calls himself John (i. 1, 4, 9, xxii. 8), and there is no indication whatever that he was laying claim to a name that did not belong to him. The earliest tradition uniformly represents him as the apostle John, the son of Zebedee and Salome, concerning whom we have the evidence of unimpeachable witnesses that he spent the latter part of his life in Ephesus. The opposition to this tradition which afterwards arose is of no weight, inasmuch as it does not rest upon any foundation of facts, but sprang from the increasing difficulty which readers found in adapting themselves to the ideas of the book, especially in regard to the stumbling-block which presented itself in the doctrine of the millennium or Messianic reign of a thousand years. In more recent times, the apostolic origin of the book has frequently been disputed on the ground that it is impossible that the Fourth Gospel and the Revelation can both be the work of one and the same author, the character of each of the writings being far too diverse from that of the other. Correct as this statement is, it must not be used, however, against the Revelation, which can produce far stronger evidence in support of its claim to be the work of the apostle John than the Fourth Gospel, which in any case is not from the hand of this apostle.

In the most recent times, however, the apostolic origin of the Revelation has been doubted even by biblical scholars who do not regard the Fourth Gospel as Johannine. Their chief grounds are as follows: The apocalyptic writer never describes himself as an apostle, and indeed he speaks of the twelve immediate disciples of Jesus in a manner in which he would scarcely have spoken of them if he had himself belonged to their circle (xviii. 20, xxi. 14). Then there are no traces whatever in the book of the intimate relation to Jesus occupied by the disciple John, together with Peter and James. The figure of Jesus himself is so little human and individual, that it cannot be drawn by the hand of a disciple who had lived for years never to be forgotten with his Lord and Master. The Revelation, moreover, displays an amount of erudition and literary skill which would be more credible in a trained theological writer than in a simple fisherman of Galilee, such as John was. Finally, there are many who even declare that the very tradition of the apostle John's residence in Ephesus is unhistorical, and has arisen from a confusion between the apostle and a contemporary of the same name, the presbyter John, to whom even in ancient times the Revelation was occasionally ascribed.

But, though several of these objections are well worthy of consideration, none of them is conclusive. The presbyter John, in particular, is a figure of such doubtful historical reality, that any appeal to him is more likely to confuse than to solve the uncertain problem.

In any case, it is significant that the idea of the character of the writer which we cannot fail to derive from the Revelation, is remarkably like the figure of the apostle John as he appears in the writings of Paul, the first three Gospels, and several of the earliest ecclesiastical writers. The most prudent and unassailable answer to the question of the authorship of the Revelation will ever be, that the writer was a Jewish Christian of Asia Minor named John, and that there is neither proof nor disproof of the validity of the tradition which declares him to have been the apostle of that name.



## 4. VALUE OF THE BOOK.

That the expectations of the Revelation have not been fulfilled, requires, now-a-days, no proof. But this fact detracts nothing from our estimation of this enigmatical book, and the effects which have been produced by it. We cannot but regret the misuse which enthusiasts and fanatics have made of it, drawing from it, as they supposed, the whole history of the world and the church to the end of time, and ever with special ingenuity fitting the apocalyptic descriptions of the impious and ungodly powers to their own enemies for the time being; a delusion which should be relegated to a history of human folly, and is now happily dying out. The Revelation, however, has not been without homage of a superior kind to this. In times of bitter persecution, it was a book of consolation for the confessors of Jesus, who were upheld and strengthened by its promises. Some of its most powerful utterances (e.g. ii. 10, iii. 11, 19, xiv. 13, xxi. 4) have always had an awakening and uplifting effect upon religious minds. And, finally, it has supplied both the impulse and the material requisite for the production of lofty poetic figures and scenes, to not a few poets, both mediæval and modern, as, for example, Dante, Milton, Klopstock and Schiller.

While most other writings of this character fall into a number of disconnected scenes, the Revelation of John is distinguished by a strictly preserved unity and a happy combination of the various elements that are worked up in it. As it not only equals but even surpasses its Old Testament model, the Book of Daniel, we may confidently regard it as the most perfect production of the Jewish-Christian apocalyptic school. Its high historical value is due to the fact that it is the oldest document of Jewish Christianity, and, next to the genuine Epistles of Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews, the oldest book in the canon of the New Testament. Hence this book and the writings just mentioned are the most important of all sources for our knowledge of primitive Christianity as developed in the generation immediately following the departure of Jesus.

## THE REVELATION OF JOHN.

### i.—iii. PROLOGUE.

i. 1—3. *Title and superscription of the book, and commendation of it to the Christian communities.*

1. The thought that Christ received from his Father all that he possesses and gives to his own, occurs also elsewhere in the Revelation (ii. 27, iii. 21, vi. 2, xx. 4). Hence the subordination of the Son to the Father is undoubtedly assumed in this book.—*He* = Jesus Christ.—*Signified it*: i.e. made it clear by signs and words.—*His servant*: John, like Paul (Rom. i. 1; Gal. i. 10; Phil. i. 1) and James (James i. 1), calls himself a “servant of Christ.”

2. “Who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ whatsoever things he saw.” [The words *bare record* and *testimony* are similar words in the Greek.]—*Saw*: The revelation was given to him in the form of a vision.

3. *Blessed is he that readeth, &c.*: i.e. the reader and the congregation of those that listen to him. Hence it appears that John intends his book to be read in the gatherings for public worship.

i. 4—8. *Dedication to the seven Christian communities of Asia Minor, and short statement of the theme of the book.*

4. *Asia* = Asia Minor, in accordance with ancient usage. Besides the Christian communities here mentioned, there are also others known to us which existed at that time in Asia Minor, e.g. at Colossæ and Hierapolis (Col. iv. 13). John’s confinement of himself to seven communities is explained by the significance which he attaches to the sacred number of seven.—*From him which is and which was and which is to come*: A paraphrase of the Hebrew divine name “Yahveh” (erroneously pronounced “Jehovah”). The alteration of the usual phrase “which shall be” into *which is to come*, is occasioned by the reference to the approaching advent of the Lord.—*The seven Spirits*: The seven archangels who, according to the later Jewish belief, which had



its origin in the doctrines of Zoroaster, surrounded the throne of God (Tob. xii. 15, comp. Zech. iii. 9, iv. 10). [Zech. iii. 9, "Upon one stone shall be seven eyes," i.e. seven eyes shall watch over it, i.e. seven angels, which, according to Zech. iv. 10, are as the eyes of Yahveh. In the latter verse there is also a reading, "watchers" for "eyes."]

5. *First begotten*: "first born." [*Loved*: The best MSS. read "loves."—*Washed*: The oldest MSS. read "loosed," or, as some render it, "redeemed." We should then have to translate "with" for *in* "his own blood."]

6. *Kings and priests*: comp. v. 10, xx. 6. The expression is taken from Ex. xix. 6; Is. lxi. 6.—[The best MSS. read, "And hath made us a kingdom, priests unto God and his Father" (or, as some render it, "his God and Father"), &c.]

7. *Clouds*: "the clouds."—*Kindreds*: "tribes."—Comp. with this verse Dan. vii. 13.—*They which pierced him*: i.e. his murderers. The expression is taken from a passage in Zechariah (Zech. xii. 10), erroneously interpreted as referring to the Messiah (comp. John xix. 37).

8. Alpha and Omega, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, i.e. the beginning and the end (comp. xxi. 6; Is. xlv. 6), as is rightly explained. The explanation itself is, however, a later interpolation, and the words *the beginning and the ending* should be omitted here from the text.

#### i. 9—20. *Introductory vision.*

This vision sets forth, after the fashion of the ancient prophets, the commission which the Lord has given to the seer, in order to secure the belief of the readers in his prophecies.

9. *Patmos*: a small island over against Ephesus, the modern name of which is Patmo or Palmosa. All that we can infer from the words that follow is, that John was in Patmos either that he might receive or that he might proclaim to others *the word of God* (i.e. the word that comes from God) *and the testimony of Jesus* (i.e. the testimony which Jesus bears). The ecclesiastical fathers misunderstood the passage, and took it to mean that he was there as a martyr to this *word and testimony*; and hence the tradition became current that he had been banished to this island by a Roman emperor.

10. *In the Spirit* = in a state of prophetic ecstasy.—*The Lord's*

*day* is Sunday, the day of the resurrection. The day was not observed by the church, indeed, in apostolic times, but it was nevertheless felt by the Christian mind to be a sacred day (comp. Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2).—[Some commentators render, “In the spirit I was present at the day of the Lord.”]

11. Read, “Saying, What thou seest, write in a book,” &c. The intervening words are an interpolation. [There is the same authority of all the oldest MSS. for omitting the words *which are in Asia*.]—The churches addressed in ver. 4 are here enumerated. For remarks on these various cities see below (notes to ch. ii. iii.).

12. “Seven golden lamp-stands” [so properly, and not *candlesticks*] in imitation of the lamp-stands on which were placed the seven lamps in the tabernacle (Exod. xxv. 37, xxxvii. 23). What they signify is explained by ver. 20.

13. *The son of man*: “A son of man,” i.e. the Messiah (after Dan. vii. 13). *Clothed with a garment down to the foot*, &c.: a description of the priestly dress (comp. Dan. x. 5). See note on xv. 6.

14. Comp. Dan. vii. 9.

16. For the meaning of the seven stars, see ver. 20.—*A sharp two-edged sword*: comp. Is. xlix. 2.—*As the sun*: comp. Judges v. 31.

17, 18. *Fear not*, &c.: “Fear not; I am the first and the last and the living One; and I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever, and have the keys,” &c. [So very many translators.]—*Hell* [Gr. Hades, see note on vi. 8], not the abode of the damned, but the under-world, into which, according to the belief of that age, the souls of the departed passed with few exceptions (see note on xx. 4). [The best MSS. read, “the keys of death and of Hades.”]

20. *Candlesticks*: “lamp-stands.”—*The seven churches*: “seven churches.”—*Which thou sawest* should be omitted in the second part of the verse.—The *angels* are not the presidents of the communities, but the guardian angels of the communities (comp. Matt. xviii. 10; Acts xii. 15), whom John regarded as their representatives; so that in what follows he says of the angel, as the personified spirit of the community, what really applies to each community.



Ch. ii. iii. *Seven letters, each consisting of an address, letter proper, and conclusion.*

ii. 1—7. *Letter to the community at Ephesus.*

1. *Of Ephesus*: “in Ephesus.”—On Ephesus and the Christian community there, see introduction to the Epistle to the Ephesians.

2. As Paul had many opponents to contend with in Ephesus about the year A.D. 58 (1 Cor. xvi. 9), and after his death a school hostile to him actually became supreme there (Acts xx. 29 sqq.), nothing can be more natural than to suppose that those who “say that they are apostles and are not,” are Paul himself and his fellow-labourers. The apocalyptic writer recognizes no apostle except the twelve (xxi. 14).

3. Read, “And hast patience and didst bear for my name’s sake, and hast not been weary.”

4. *Hast left*: strictly, “didst leave.”

5. *Quickly* should be omitted.—The threat contained in this verse signifies, I will exclude thee from the number of the Christian communities.

6. *Nicolaitans*: This enigmatical name must not be understood as the name of a definite sect, founded, as many ancient commentators have supposed, by Nicolas of Antioch (Acts vi. 5). The Greek name Nicolaos (conqueror of the people) has pretty much the same signification as the Hebrew Bileam (destroyer of the people), and so we should rather regard these Nicolaitans as more or less the same as those who “hold the doctrine of Bileam” (ver. 14). On this see further notes on vv. 14, 20.

7. *He that hath an ear, let him hear*: An exhortation several times used by John to call the attention of his readers to revelations of especial importance (vv. 7, 11, 17, 29, iii. 6, 13, 22, xiii. 9). It is derived from Jesus himself (Matt. xi. 15, xiii. 9, 43).—*The tree of life*: see note on xxii. 1 sqq.—[*In the midst of*: The best MSS. read simply “in.”]

ii. 8—11. *Letter to the community at Smyrna.*

8. *Smyrna*: A famous Ionian commercial city, situated on an arm of the sea, which was called from it the bay of Smyrna, at the mouth of the river Meles, about 36 miles north of Ephesus. Under the earlier Roman emperors it was one of the most

beautiful and populous cities of Asia Minor. In the following century, Polycarp, well known by his martyr's death, was bishop of the Christian community there.

9. *Works and* should be omitted.—According to the primitive Christian view, those who believe in Christ are the true Israel (comp. Gal. vi. 16; Phil. iii. 3). Hence John refuses to reckon the unbelieving Jews as Jews at all. According to him, they are not, as they suppose, a synagogue of God, but of Satan.

10. *The devil*: as the god of this world (2 Cor. iv. 4), whose power culminates immediately before the dawn of the Messianic age.—*Ten days*: a round number to indicate a short time of trial (Dan. i. 12 sqq.). *A crown of life*: strictly, "the crown of life." The victors in the Greek games received as a prize a golden crown (comp. 1 Cor. ix. 25; Jas. i. 12).

11. *The second death*: see xx. 14.

ii. 12—17. *Letter to the community at Pergamos.*

12. *Pergamos*, on the river Caicus, formerly the residence of the kings descended from Attalus, famous for its temple of Æsculapius or Asklepios (the god of healing). The image of the god was placed on a throne encircled by a serpent.

13. Read, "I know where thou dwellest, where Satan's throne is," &c. "Satan's throne:" an allusion to the temple of Æsculapius.—Nothing further is known of Antipas. [*Satan's seat*: The word here rendered *seat* is the Greek "thronos." It is used of the seat of God, of the elders, of the Roman emperors, &c., and is variously translated *throne* or *seat* in A.V. Comp. i. 4, ii. 13, iv. 2, 4, 10, xiii. 2, xvi. 10, 17, &c.]

14. *Balaam*: the Greek form of the Hebrew Bileam. Under the guidance of Bileam, the Moabitish king Balak seduced the Israelites to the worship of Baal Peor and the immoralities connected with his worship (Num. xxv. 1 sqq., xxxi. 8, 16). That the Pauline Gentile Christians did not fear to eat flesh offered to idols, often even at the temple feasts, and that they were not always very particular about the observance of the seventh commandment, is shown by the First Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. vi. 13, viii. x.). While Paul declares that there is no harm in the eating of flesh offered to idols in itself, and only wishes it to be avoided for the sake of the weak, John rejects it unconditionally, thus coming into collision with the view ex-



pressed in Acts xv. 20—29. It is possible that fornication ought not to be understood here in the strict sense, but as referring to matrimonial alliances with Gentiles, which were forbidden to the Jews.

15. [*Nicolaitans*: see note on ver. 6.]—*Which thing I hate* should be omitted.

17. *To eat* should be omitted.—*The hidden manna*: There is here an allusion to the belief which arose concerning the pot of manna which, according to Exod. xvi. 32—34, stood before the ark of the covenant as a memorial of the feeding of the people in the wilderness, and which was lost, together with the ark, at the time when the Temple was destroyed by the Chaldeans (B.C. 586). This later belief was, that it had been placed in concealment by Jeremiah, and would be produced again in the Messianic kingdom.—*A white stone*: Votes in favour of an accused person were given by the judges with a white stone. It is here the symbol of the happy lot of the victors.—*A new name*: After Is. lxii. 2, where Jerusalem receives a new name (comp. Rev. xiv. 1). The name meant is Yahveh (Jehovah), which no one might utter.

ii. 18—29. *Letter to the community at Thyatira.*

18. *Thyatira*, a city in Lydia, on the river Lycus, about thirty-two miles north of Sardis, famous for its manufacture of purple dye. (Lydia, the seller of purple, came from Thyatira. Acts xvi. 14.)

[19. *And thy works*, &c.: The best MSS. read, “And thy last works are more than the first.”]

20. [*A few things*: One ancient MS. reads “much;” others simply, “I have against thee that thou sufferest,” &c.]—*That woman* should be “thy wife.” [The MSS. are divided between “the woman” and “thy wife.”—*To teach*, &c.: The best MSS. read, “and she teacheth and seduceth,” &c.]—The name Jezebel, which, like the name Nicolaitans, must be interpreted symbolically, signifies that the bearer of it, like the Phœnician princess Jezebel, the wife of Ahab (1 Kings xvi. 31, xviii. 13, 19, xix. 1 sq.), encouraged and promoted idolatry. Probably we ought not to understand the name to refer to any individual, but to a party existing in the community, the adherents of which are called her children (ver. 23). (We may compare xii. 17, where the true Christians are spoken of as the children of the woman who

represents the community of God.) This party in Thyatira is the same as the Bileamites in Pergamos. The very same reproach is brought against both.—*Prophetess*: The name of prophet is especially dear to the apocalyptic writer, who lives altogether in Old Testament views and ideas (comp. x. 7, xi. 18, xxii. 6, 9). Hence the desecration of it provokes his strongest indignation.

22. *A bed*: i.e. a bed of sickness. I threaten her with sickness.—*Them that commit adultery with her*: In the Old Testament the connection between the people of Israel and God is habitually regarded in the light of a marriage, so that idolatry, which breaks this tie, is regarded as adultery. In this figurative sense the word is to be understood here also.

23. *Searcheth the reins and hearts*: Ps. vii. 9.

24, 25. Read, "But unto you I say, unto the rest that are in Thyatira," &c.—*As they speak*: "as they say."—Probably the opponents of the Law in Thyatira boasted with Paul (1 Cor. ii. 10) that they had known the depths of the Godhead. John, however, reckons what they have known as the depths of Satan.—*I will put upon you none other burden, &c.*: No new yoke of the Law is laid upon the community. They are only called upon faithfully to observe until the return of the Lord those precepts which are still in force among them, which include the prohibition of flesh offered to idols and intermarriage with the Gentiles.

27. After Ps. ii 9, to which a Messianic interpretation was given.—[*Rule*: strictly, "pasture," i.e. tend them as a shepherd tends his sheep. So the Greek version of the psalm reads.]

28. In Daniel xii. 3 it is said that, in the Messianic age, they that direct many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever. Here they that overcome are adorned with the *morning star*, so that they now shine with its glory (comp. xii. 1).

### iii. 1—6. *Letter to the community at Sardis.*

1. *Sardis* or Sardes, the ancient capital of Lydia, situated at the foot of Mount Tmolus, on a plain through which the river Pactolus flows, about thirty-two miles south of Thyatira. During the reign of Tiberius the city was destroyed by an earthquake, but was rebuilt with the assistance of the emperor. The village of Sart now stands on the site of the ancient city.

2. Works, if they are to suffice for the salvation of him who does them, must complete the measure appointed by God, which



was not yet the case with the works of the community in Sardis.—[*Before God*: The best MSS. read, “before my God.”]

3. *As a thief*, &c.: comp. Matt. xxiv. 43; 1 Thess. v. 2.

4. “But thou hast a few names in Sardis,” &c.—Purity of garments is a symbol of inner purity.

5. *And I will not blot out his name*, &c.: As the Hebrews were enrolled in lists by the authorities, and no one whose name was missing could claim membership in the Israelitish community, so the names of those who are destined for eternal life are written down in a book in heaven, which is therefore called the Book of Life (xiii. 8, xvii. 8, xx. 12, 15, xxi. 27. See also Exod. xxxii. 32 sq.; Ps. lxix. 28, cxxxix. 16; Is. iv. 3; Dan. xii. 1; Phil. iv. 3). Whoever is blotted out of this book is doomed to eternal destruction.—*I will confess his name*: comp. Matt. x. 32; Luke xii. 8.

iii. 7—13. *Letter to the community at Philadelphia.*

7. *Philadelphia* was situated about twenty-five miles south-east of Sardis. Its modern name is Allah-shehr.—*He that hath the key of David*, &c.: an allusion to Is. xxii. 22. The Messiah has authority to admit into his kingdom or to exclude from it whom he will.

8. *An open door*: opportunity for the spread of the gospel (comp. 1 Cor. xvi. 9).

9. Comp. ii. 9.—The promise is after Is. xlv. 14.

10. *The word of my patience*: so called inasmuch as it preaches patience as the best means for obtaining victory.—*The hour of temptation*: i.e. of trial. What is here meant is the Messianic woes. See Introd. pp. 225 sq.

11. *Hold that fast which thou hast*: observe the commandments given to thee.—*Thy crown*: which is laid up ready for thee in heaven.

12. *A pillar in the temple*: as the apostles James, Peter and John, were regarded as pillars or supports of the spiritual temple, the Christian community (Gal. ii. 9).—*New Jerusalem*: see xxi. 10.—*My new name*: the same that is meant in xix. 12.

iii. 14—22. *Letter to the community at Laodicea.*

14. *Of the Laodiceans*: “In Laodicea” [so all the old MSS.].—Laodicea was a wealthy commercial city on the Lycus, in

Phrygia. In the year 62 it was destroyed, together with the neighbouring cities of Colossæ and Hierapolis, by an earthquake. Its own resources, however, sufficed for its speedy restoration.—*The Amen*: i.e. the true, the trustworthy.—*The beginning of the creation of God*: comp. John i. 1 sqq.; Col. i. 16.

15. The community is suffering from want of religious earnestness. It has not sufficient zeal either for a decided acceptance or a decided rejection of the gospel.

16. That which is lukewarm provokes nausea. Hence one cannot keep it long in one's mouth. The community is here threatened with exclusion from the roll of the Christian communities.

18. *White raiment*: see note on ver. 4.—*And anoint, &c.*, should be, "and eye-salve to anoint thine eyes," &c.

19. Comp. Heb. xii. 6.

20. *I stand at the door*: comp. Luke xii. 36.—*Will sup with him*: a sign of the most intimate fellowship. Compare the habitual representation of the kingdom of heaven, under the figure of a meal to which guests are invited, in the gospel parables.

21. Comp. Matt. xix. 28.—The dominion of Jesus still appears as the reward of his victory, and not as anything that belongs to him as his own from the beginning.

#### iv. *The throne of God.*

1. The beginning of the revelation. The seer, who has hitherto been upon earth, is now removed to heaven, and there sees in pictures what is to happen on earth.—*A door was opened* should be "a door had been opened" [or, as some translate, "behold, an opened door in heaven"].

2. The seer purposely abstains from uttering the name of God, and leaves it to be understood from the context (comp. Ezek. i. 26 sq.).

4. [*Throne . . . . seats*: the same word in the Greek; see note on ii. 13.]—In Dan. vii. 9, thrones are mentioned in the last judgment, and hence assessors with God are assumed. The later Judaism fixed their number at twenty-four. Here we must understand the twenty-four to be the representatives of the old and new people of the covenant, the twelve patriarchs of the Israelitish nation, and the twelve apostles.

5. *The seven Spirits*: comp. i. 4.



6. *A sea of glass*: comp. Exod. xxiv. 10; Ezek. i. 22.—*Four beasts*: The Greek word denotes living creatures generally, so that it may also include men.

7, 8. *And the four beasts, &c.*, should be, “And the four beasts have each of them six wings, and are full of eyes round about,” &c.—The seer has in his mind the description of the cherubim (Ezek. i. 10), the figures of which were composed of a man, a lion, a steer and an eagle. He chooses, however, not four, but six wings, in imitation of Is. vi. 2, from which passage he also borrows the song of praise which the four beings sing as the representatives of the visible creation.

9—11. Read, “And whenever the beasts shall give glory and honour and thanks to Him that sitteth upon the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, then the four-and-twenty elders will fall down before Him that sitteth upon the throne, and will worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, our Lord and God, to receive,” &c.

10, 11. Comp. v. 12 sq., x. 6.

#### v. *The Book of Fate.*

1. The book contains the fate of the world. We must understand it, like all the books of the ancients, to be written in the form of a roll; and to show the abundance of its contents, it is stated that even the back is written upon, whereas the usual rolls were only written within.

3. *Under the earth*: in the under-world, which was peopled by the departed.

4. John weeps because he fears that he will not receive the revelation.—*And to read* should be omitted.

5. *The lion of the tribe of Juda*: So Christ is called, after Gen. xlix. 9, and again *the root of David*, after Is. xi. 1, 10.—*Hath prevailed*: “hath overcome.”

6. Christ is represented under the figure of a lamb, after Is. liii. 7. The *seven horns* are a symbol of power. On the *seven Spirits*, see note on i. 4.

8. The incense of the priests offering sacrifice was the symbol of the prayers offered up to God.

9. *A new song*: comp. Ps. xxxiii. 3, xl. 3.—*Us* should be omitted.

10. *Us . . . . we* should be “them . . . . they.”—[*Kings*: Two of the best MSS. read, “a kingdom.”]

11. The number of the heavenly hosts is given after Dan. vii. 10.—[*Ten thousand times ten thousand*: Gr. “myriads of myriads,” i.e. strictly, “ten-thousands of ten-thousands.”]

14. Read, “And the four beasts (or “living creatures”) said Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped.” The other words of this verse should be omitted.

vi. 1—8. *The first four seals.*

1. The Book of Fate is now opened, and it should be noticed that its contents are not read, but appear in visible form before the eye of the beholder as the seals are opened.—[*The seals*: The best MSS. read, “the seven seals.”]—*Come*: The words *and see* should be omitted here and in the corresponding passages (vv. 3, 5, 7) as not genuine. The word *Come* must then be taken as addressed, not to the seer, but to the rider who appears directly after it is uttered.

2. The rider, who appears arrayed as a Roman general in his triumph, is indisputably the Messiah (see xix. 11 sqq.). He bears *a bow* because (according to xvii. 14) he is to overcome the Parthians, who are famous as archers. He receives *a crown* as the prize of his certain victory (see note on xviii. 2).

3. *And see* should be omitted; see note on ver. 1.

4. *Red*: the colour of blood (comp. ver. 12, xii. 3, xvii. 3 sq.). The second rider is the symbol of war and bloodshed.

5, 6. *Come and see*: see note on ver. 1.—The third rider is the symbol of dearth and famine. The balance in his hand signifies that men are compelled scrupulously to weigh out all the necessities of life. The measure of wheat shall cost a penny. (Gr. “a denarius,” i.e. about sevenpence-halfpenny). Three measures of barley shall cost the same. A denarius was a labourer’s daily wage (comp. Matt. xx. 2). It was also a soldier’s pay. Hence these must give their whole earnings to purchase bread. That the oil and the wine remain uninjured only increases the misery of the situation, as the poor derive no benefit from this.—[*Measure*: Gr. “choenix,” which was one day’s allowance of corn or meal.]

7. *And see*: see note on ver. 1.

8. *Pale*: i.e. in appearance like death.—*Hell* [Gr. Hades], i.e. the under-world as the residence of the dead, is here personified,



and follows after death in order to seize upon those who have been slaughtered by him. [Hades of the Greek mythology was properly a person, not a place. The genitive case of the name was properly used for his kingdom. Afterwards the name itself was used as the name of a place. Both usages are found in the New Testament.]

vi. 9—11. *The fifth seal.*

9. The martyrs whose souls John sees are the Christians who had been slain by Nero (see Introd. p. 226). They are *under the altar* because they have been sacrificed, the blood of the beasts for sacrifice being poured out at the foot of the altar. Hence they are already in heaven, not in the under-world; but they have not yet entered upon the full enjoyment of heavenly bliss. See note on xx. 4.

11. "And a white robe was given to each one of them." [So all the best MSS.]. The white robe is an acknowledgment of the right of the martyrs to partake in the Messianic kingdom. Comp. iii. 4 sq., vii. 9, xix. 8.

vi. 12—17. *The sixth seal.*

The description that now follows is formed of extracts from the Old Testament. With the picture here given of the convulsions of the last times, we may compare Matt. xxiv. 29 and the parallel passages.

12—14. Comp. Is. xxxiv. 4.

12. *And the moon, &c.*, should be, "and the moon became all as blood."

14. *A scroll*: i.e. a book in the form of a roll such as the ancients used. See note on v. 1.

16. Comp. Hos. x. 8; Luke xxiii. 30.

vii. 1—8. *The sealing of those who are chosen out of Israel.*

1. The stillness here secured by the angels is fitting for the solemnity of the proceeding which is described in the following verses.

2, 3. It was customary among the ancients to brand slaves with the name of their master. So, here, those who are marked with the seal of God are declared to be God's possession, upon whom, therefore, no power may lay hands. Comp. Exod. xii. 13; Ezek. ix. 4 sqq. In this sealing there is an allusion to baptism,

which the Fathers called the “seal of the Lord;” just as circumcision, the place of which was taken by baptism, is similarly regarded by Paul as a seal (Rom. iv. 11).

4—8. The reckoning adopted here is unusual. Elsewhere we usually find that the tribe of Levi, which had no territorial possessions, is omitted, and the tribe of Joseph is divided into the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. Here, however, in addition to Joseph, which includes these two tribes, Manasseh is mentioned separately, and so is counted twice over, the omission of Dan making room for it among the twelve. It is possible that Dan may have originally followed after Naphthali in ver. 6, and that the name may have been mistaken by a copyist for Man. (as an abbreviation of Manasseh). The twelve times twelve thousand (144,000) Israelites make up the full number of the citizens of the Messianic kingdom.—The words *were sealed* should not be repeated after the name of each tribe. In the old MSS. they only occur at the beginning and end, after Judah and Benjamin.

vii. 9—17. *The redeemed from among the Gentiles.*

14. Their claim to participate in the Messianic kingdom rests upon the steadfastness which they have manifested during the great tribulation, and upon the sacrificial death of Jesus, the merit of which they have appropriated.

16. Comp. Is. xlix. 10; Ps. cxxi. 6.

17. Comp. xxi. 4; Is. xxv. 8.

viii. 1. *The seventh seal.*

1. When the seventh seal is opened, which contains that which is most important of all, the final judgment, there is a pause, in order to raise expectation to its highest degree. The contents are not revealed all at once to the eye of the seer, but are divided into seven occurrences, which are introduced by the trumpets of seven angels.

viii. 2—6. *The action in heaven preparatory to the sounding of the seven trumpets.*

2. *Stood* should be “stand.”—On the seven angels, see note on i. 4. They stand before God to serve Him. Comp. 1 Kings xvii. 1; Luke i. 19.

3. *That he should offer it with, &c.*: lit. “that he should give



it to the prayers of all saints," &c., i.e. that he should make their prayers of good savour, or, to drop the metaphor, pleasing to God.

4. Read, "And the smoke of the incense went up to (i.e. in assistance of) the prayers of the saints, out of the hand of the angel before God."

5. *Into*: "upon."

viii. 7—13. *The first four trumpets.*

The plagues here described are described mainly after the plagues which Moses brought upon Egypt. Comp. Exod. vii.—x. It should be noticed that whereas the occurrences which take place after the opening of the first six seals affect the whole of mankind, and destroy the fourth part of it (vi. 8), these plagues fall only upon Gentiles and Jews and upon the third part of the earth.

7. After the word *earth* should be added, "and the third part of the earth was burnt up."

8. Comp. Jer. li. 25.

10. Comp. Is. xiv. 12.—*Lamp*: "torch."

11. The fulfilment of the threat uttered by Jeremiah (Jer. ix. 15, xxiii. 15), that God would feed the disobedient people with wormwood.

12. The partial darkening of the sun deprives a third part of the day of its usual light, and the partial darkening of the moon and stars has the same effect upon a third part of the night.

13. *An angel* should be "an eagle." The eagle is chosen as a majestic, swift and unwearied bird. Comp. iv. 7, xii. 14; Is. xl. 31. He flies in "mid-heaven," i.e. where the sun stands at mid-day. His cry announces three separate plagues (woes), of which the first is described in ix. 1—12, the second in ix. 13—21, xi. 13, 14, and the third in ch. xvi. [the actual sounding of the seventh trumpet being mentioned in xi. 15, after which comes a long interlude before the woes which follow in ch. xvi.].

ix. 1—12. *The fifth trumpet. The first woe.*

1. *Fall*: "fallen."—*The bottomless pit*: "the well of the abyss" [so lit.].—The angels who rebelled against God are regarded as stars fallen from heaven. Comp. Luke x. 18, after Is. xiv. 12. Such an angel we must understand here also.—"Abyss," in its more comprehensive sense = the under-world; in its narrower

sense, a definite portion of the under-world, which was the abode of evil spirits and the damned. The meaning is the same in xi. 7, xx. 1, 3; Luke viii. 31.

2. [*The bottomless pit*: the same here as in ver. 1.]—*The smoke of a great furnace*: comp. Gen. xix. 28. For the darkening of the sun and air by smoke containing a swarm of locusts (see ver. 3), compare Joel ii. 10.

3—11. The description of the locusts is partly borrowed from Joel ii. 1—11, but the apocalyptic writer surpasses him by the addition of some further features of terror.

3. *Power, as the scorpions of the earth have power*: i.e. they are to injure men only, and not vegetation.

4. *Those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads*: i.e. all who are not Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles. Comp. vii. 3.

5. Five months is the period of summer and of the locusts.

6. Comp. Job iii. 21.

10, 11. Read, "And they have tails like unto scorpions and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men five months. And they have a king over them, the angel of the abyss," &c.

11. *Abaddon* means "destruction;" *Apollyon* signifies "destroyer." The former word is used in the Old Testament to signify the kingdom of destruction [and is translated "destruction" in A.V.] (Job xxvi. 6, xxviii. 22). Among the Rabbis it was used more specifically to denote the lowest chamber of hell. The personification here is similar to that of death and the under-world (vi. 8, xx. 14). A tendency to this personification may be found as early as the Book of Job (Job xxviii. 22).

12. Read, "The one woe is past, and behold there come two more woes after these things."

ix. 13—21. *The sixth trumpet. The beginning of the second woe.*

14. The river Euphrates was the boundary between the Roman and the Parthian dominions. The innumerable hordes of the Parthian cavalry had often been dangerous to Rome. They appear here as the second woe.

15. *An hour* should be "the hour."

16. *Two hundred thousand thousand*: lit. "twice ten thousand times ten thousand."—John hears the number because it is impossible to count them.



17. *In the vision*: John is still in the spirit (iv. 1).—*Of jacinth* should be “dark red.” [The three epithets of the breastplates are usually understood to refer to the colour of them.]

18. Read, “By these three plagues was the third part of men killed,” &c.

19. Read, “For the power of the horses is in their mouth and in their tails, for their tails are like unto serpents and have heads, and with them they do hurt.”

20. Read, “And the rest of men which were not killed,” &c.—It appears from this verse that the object of the plagues was to bring non-Christian humanity to repentance.—*Works of their hands*: i.e. not their doings, but the things which their hands had made, their idols (comp. Deut. iv. 28; Ps. cxxxv. 15; Acts vii. 41).—*That they should not worship devils*, &c.: John holds the belief, which was common to the later Judaism and the ancient Fathers, that evil spirits seduced the Gentiles to idolatry, and appropriated to themselves the worship and sacrifices which the latter thought to offer to their gods (comp. 1 Cor. x. 20).—For expressions concerning idols similar to those we find here, see Ps. cxv. 4 sq.; Is. xli. 21—24; Baruch vi. 3 sqq.

21. Sorcery was rife at this time both among Gentiles and Jews (comp. Acts xix. 13—19).—That even Jews were not free from theft and adultery is shown by Rom. ii. 21 sq.

#### x. *John's consecration as a prophet.*

1. Ere the last woe comes, there is again a pause which is filled by two symbolic proceedings. In the first place the seer is consecrated, like Ezekiel of old, to the prophetic calling (comp. Ezek. ii. 8—iii. 3).—*Down from heaven*: From this it appears that John is again upon earth, whereas hitherto he has been in heaven (v. 1, 5 sq., vii. 9—17, viii. 1 sq., ix. 13). From this point to the end of the book he retains his position upon the earth (x. 4, 8 sq., xiv. 2, 13, xix. 10 sq., xx. 1, xxi. 2, 10) and sees all from there.

2. *A little book*: This is the remainder of the Book of Fate (v. 1), containing the most important part of all, viz. the final judgment.

3. *Seven thunders* should be “the seven thunders.” The phrase is derived from Ps. xxix. 3—9, where the voice of the Lord is mentioned seven times as like the rolling thunder.

4. The sealing up is secured by not writing these things.

5. Comp. Dan. xii. 7.

6. *That there should be time no longer*: “that there should be no more time” [which very many commentators understand to mean “no further delay”].

7. Read, “But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he shall sound, is fulfilled [lit. was finished] the mystery of God,” &c.—*As he hath declared*, &c.: comp. Amos iii. 7.

8 sqq. The meaning of the symbolic act here described is, that John must receive into the inmost depths of his being the substance of the revelation. It is first a joy to him, but is bitter to him within his soul, and leaves him no peace until he proclaims it to others, as is commanded him in ver. 11.

11. *Before* should be “concerning.”

xi. 1—14. *The fate of Jerusalem. The end of the second woe.*

1. Second symbolic action, after Ezek. xl. 3.—The scene is here in Jerusalem, as is indisputably evident from ver. 1 (*the temple of God*), ver. 2 (*the holy city*), and ver. 8 (*the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our (or, according to the correct reading, “their”) Lord was crucified*).—We should read here, “And there was given me a reed like unto a rod (i.e. a measuring rod), saying, Rise,” &c. Grammatically, the word “saying” in the original text is made by an oversight of the writer to refer to the word “reed.” The speaker is the giver of the reed, understood, and not further defined.—The measuring, as we see from ver. 2, signifies that that which is measured is declared to be inviolable [comp. Mark xiii. 2; Luke xix. 44]. The altar is the altar of incense adjacent to the Temple itself.

2. By the *Gentiles* we can only understand the Romans, who were at this time (A.D. 68) undertaking an expedition against Jerusalem.—*The holy city shall they tread under foot*: comp. Luke xxi. 24.—*Forty and two months*: the period during which, according to Daniel (Dan. vii. 25, viii. 13 sq., ix. 27, xii. 7), the oppression of the Jewish people was to last.

3. *My two witnesses*: i.e. two well-known men resident at the time in Jerusalem. According to ver. 8 [“their Lord”], we must understand them to be disciples of Jesus, perhaps the last of the apostolic circle. The 1260 days are equal to the 42 months.



Hence the witnesses are to prophesy during the whole period of oppression.—*In sackcloth*: i.e. in clothing of coarse material, worn as a sign of grief and repentance (Matt. xi. 21).

4. The two witnesses are described in the words which Zechariah uses of Zerubbabel and the high-priest Joshua (Zech. iv. 3, 11, 14).—[*The God*: the best MSS. read “the Lord.”]

5, 6. In miraculous powers the two witnesses are equal to the two men of God, Moses and Elijah, who performed signs similar to those which are here mentioned (Exod. vii. 19; 1 Kings xvii. 1; 2 Kings i. 10 sqq.).

7. “The beast that ascendeth out of the abyss:” see note on xvii. 8.—The word “abyss” must be understood here as in ix. 1.

8. *Sodom and Egypt*: Jerusalem is so called because of its godlessness, in which it rivalled the inhabitants of Sodom in the days of Lot, and the Egyptians of the time of Moses. Comp. Is. i. 10, iii. 9; Jer. xxiii. 14; Ezek. xvi. 48.—*Our Lord* should be “their Lord.”

9. Read, “And some of the peoples and tribes and tongues and Gentiles,” &c.—To lie unburied was regarded by the Hebrews as a grievous disgrace.

10. It was a custom of the ancients, on the occasion of any joyful occurrence, to send gifts to friends and relatives.—The prophets *tormented them that dwelt on the earth*, both by their preaching of repentance and also by the miracles they performed in punishment of the people.

11. *Entered into them*: Here the writer speaks of the past. Immediately before this he spoke of the future (vv. 7—10). The reason of this change of tense is, that what is not actually to happen until some future time, is seen by the seer in his vision as already completed; and so he often passes from the future to the past, and, conversely, from the past to the future. Compare, further, iv. 2 sq. 9 sq., ix. 1 sq. 6 sq., xiii. 7 sq. 12, xviii. 9 sq. 17, xx. 7 sq. 9 sq., xxi. 9 sq. 14 sq., xxii. 1 sq.—The restoration of the witnesses to life is after Ezek. xxxvii. 10.

12. *In a cloud*: comp. Acts i. 9; 1 Thess. iv. 17. Their enemies see the ascension of the two witnesses, so that they can have no doubt that they have been carried away to God.

13. *Of men seven thousand* (lit. “names of men seven thousand”): This would not be a tenth part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem,

the population of which at that time amounted to far more than 70,000. Seven thousand is simply a round number, probably suggested to the apocalyptic writer by the history of Elijah (vv. 5 sq.). As at that time Yahveh would only spare 7000 true worshippers (1 Kings xix. 18), so here he slays only 7000 unbelievers.—*Gave glory to the God of heaven*: in their conversion to Him (comp. xiv. 7, xvi. 9, xix. 7). A comparatively light visitation is sufficient to turn the people of Israel to the gospel, whereas the defiance and obstinacy of the Gentiles cannot be overcome even by the severest judgments (see xvi. 9, 11, 21).

14. *The second woe* embraces the visitation by the troops of horsemen (ix. 14—21) and the visitation of Jerusalem (ver. 13). *The third woe* consists of the plagues described in ch. xvi.

xi. 15—19. *The seventh trumpet.*

15. *The kingdoms of this world, &c.*, should be, “The kingdom of this world is become (the kingdom) of our Lord and of His Christ,” &c.

[16. *Seats*: see note on ii. 13.]

17. *And art to come* should be omitted.

19. *Ark of his testament* should be “ark of his covenant.”—The earthly ark of the covenant, like the pot of manna, was lost when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Chaldeans. According to the rabbinical belief, the ark, like the pot of manna [see note on ii. 17], was to appear again in the Messianic kingdom. Its appearance now denotes, therefore, that this kingdom is in course of being realized.—*And an earthquake* should be omitted.

xii. *The woman with the child, and the dragon.*

1. *Wonder*: “sign.”—The woman (as appears from ver. 5) is the mother of the Messiah. Since, however, all those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (ver. 17) are her children, she is not the physical but the spiritual mother, the community of God from which the Messiah proceeded. As this community of God is identical with the true Israel (see note on ii. 9), she appears with a crown adorned with twelve stars, which signify the twelve tribes of Israel (comp. Gen. xxxvii. 9).

2. Comp. Micah iv. 10.

3. *Wonder*: “sign.”—*Crowns* should be “diadems.”—Accord-



ing to ver. 9, the dragon is the devil. He appears with the insignia of the great power of this world, which is in his service (see xiii. 1).—*Red*: the colour of blood (comp. vi. 4, xvii. 3 sq.).

4. Comp. Dan. viii. 10, which is here carried out into further detail.

5. *Who was to rule, &c.*, should be, “who shall rule (lit. tend as a shepherd) all nations,” &c.—The seer applies to the son of the woman words of the second Psalm (ver. 9), which was interpreted Messianically, and so undoubtedly shows that the child is the Messiah.—*And her child was caught up unto God, &c.*: This evidently refers to the ascension of Jesus.

6. See note on ver. 14, where this verse is repeated.

7. *Michael* (i.e. “Who is like God?”) is one of the chief of the angel princes. See Dan. x. 13, 21, xii. 1; Jude 9.

9. The dragon is called the *old serpent* because, in the primitive age of the world in Paradise, he seduced man under the form of a serpent (Gen. iii. 1 sqq.). The Greek word *diabolos* (from which the word *Devil* is derived) signifies “slanderer.” The Hebrew *Satan* signifies “adversary.” Satan appears as a slanderer in Job i. 6 sqq., ii. 1 sqq.; as an adversary in Zech. iii. 1.

10. Read, “And I heard a loud voice, saying in heaven, Now is come the salvation and the strength and the kingdom to our God [lit. “of our God”], and the power to His Christ” [lit. “of his Christ”].

11. The martyrs have an important share in the victory over Satan.

12. *Woe to the inhabitants, &c.*, should be, “Woe to the earth and to the sea.”—*A short time*: because “the time is at hand” (i. 3), Christ cometh quickly (xxii. 20). [Comp. also x. 6.]

14. See note on viii. 13.—Read, “And to the woman were given the two wings of the great eagle,” &c.—The arid *wilderness*, with its thousand dangers, is a symbol of forsaking and misery (comp. xvii. 3).—The three-and-a-half times are the 1260 days (ver. 6), after Dan. vii. 25. By *a time*, however, we must here understand, not a single year, but a period of ten years. The community of God has passed three-and-a-half decades in the *wilderness* (i.e. in retirement and oppression) since Jesus was carried up to the throne of God.

17 sq. As the dragon cannot slay the mother of the Messiah

any more than he can slay the Messiah himself, he sets forth to fight against her children, the Christian communities scattered throughout the world.

xiii. 1—10. *The first beast.*

1. Read, "And he stood upon the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rise up out of the sea having ten horns and seven heads, and upon his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy."—The dragon goes down to the sea to summon one of his allies, who immediately appears. The beast comes up out of the sea, because it was the Hebrew belief that the sea was connected with under-world, the abyss (see xi. 7). The meaning of the figure of the beast must be sought in ch. xvii., where it is described in no ambiguous terms as the figure of the Roman empire.—On the *seven heads* and the *ten horns*, see xvii. 7 sqq.—"Names of blasphemy:" after Dan. vii. 8, xi. 36. The Roman emperors claimed the presumptuous titles of "Augustus," Gr. "Sebastos," i.e. worthy of worship, and "Divus," i.e. divine, and they frequently had divine honours paid to them.

2. In the Book of Daniel (ch. vii.), the four successive great monarchies of the world are represented under the forms of a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a fourth beast with ten horns. As the Roman empire had absorbed all preceding monarchies, its symbol is here compounded of these four forms.—*And the dragon gave him his power, &c.*: The Roman empire appears to the seer as a creation of the devil.—[*Seat*: see note on ii. 13.]

3. The head that is fatally wounded and then healed again is Nero. See note on ver. 18, and Introd. pp. 227 sq.

5. *To continue* should be "to act" or "to work."—Forty-two months = three-and-a-half times, i.e. the period borrowed from Daniel (Dan. vii. 25, xii. 7), and so frequently mentioned in the Revelation as the appointed period.

6. The *tabernacle* of God is heaven. Comp. xxi. 3.

7. *Saints* = Christians.—[*And it was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them*: Two of the best MSS. omit this.]—*All kindreds* should be "all tribes and peoples."

8. Read, "And all that dwell upon the earth will worship him, whose names are not written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain."—*The book*



*of life*: see note on iii. 5. Those whose names are entered in this book have been enrolled in it from the beginning of the world, i.e. they have from the beginning been appointed (predestined) to salvation.

9. The usual formula when the seer desires to call attention to anything of special importance. See note on ii. 7.

10. As the Roman authorities have dealt with the Christians (see ii. 10, 13), so shall it be with themselves.—*Here* (i.e. in the persecution which has been pointed out in ver. 7) what is required of the Christians is *patience* and *faith*. And what the writer of the Revelation means by patience and faith is faithful and steadfast adherence to Christianity.—[There is some uncertainty about the reading of the Greek here. Alford adopts the reading, "If any one is for captivity, into captivity he goeth; if any one is to be slain with the sword, with the sword he is to be slain." This would make the meaning of the verse to be, that the sufferings of the Christians are appointed for them, and what they have to do is to be patient and faithful.]

#### xiii. 11—18. *The second beast.*

11. The second of Satan's allies resembles in outward appearance a harmless lamb (comp. Matt. vii. 15), but speaks as seductively as the serpent of paradise. In xvi. 13, xix. 20, xx. 10, the false prophet appears in the place of this second beast. We must not, however, suppose that this false prophet, any more than the first beast, represents an individual person. We must regard him (and therefore the second beast also) as an embodiment of the pretended prophets in the pay of the Romans. The Roman emperors delighted in surrounding themselves with soothsayers and astrologers, who flattered their vanity and promised them the fulfilment of their most audacious desires. Even Jews lent themselves to such services; and not long ere this time, Josephus, himself the descendant of a priestly and royal family, had declared the Roman general Vespasian to be the expected Messiah.

12. The activity of the false prophets is devoted to the subjection of humanity to Nero on his return.

13. They rival, in their miracles, Elijah and the most eminent of the disciples of Jesus (comp. xi. 5 sq.).

14. The emperors encouraged the erection of images of them-

selves, which were worshipped with divine honours by their subjects as representing the person of the rulers themselves. Caligula even attempted to set up his statue in the Temple at Jerusalem.—*He had power*: “it was given to him” [so lit. both in this and the next verse].

15. *He had power*: “it was given to him.”—Stories of weeping, laughing and speaking images were very numerous among the ancients. The seer expects such a miracle from the statues of Nero, into which the false prophets will breathe a spirit.—*And cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed*: In the persecutions of the Christians, those who acknowledged themselves to be Christians were required by the Roman authorities to worship the image of the emperor, or to offer sacrifice to it. Refusal to do this was punished by death.

16, 17. The antichrist appears in everything as the caricature of the Christ, and a mocking imitator of him in all he does. So here he apes Christ's marking of his adherents (comp. vii. 3 sqq.). Even now no man can buy or sell without being compelled to handle the image of the emperor stamped upon the coins. Much less will it be possible to do so when the antichrist has claimed all the human race as his own.—*To receive* should be “that one should give them.”—*The mark or the name of the beast* should be “the mark, the name of the beast.”

18. The reader is directed to the indication in reference to the beast which follows, and for the understanding of which wisdom is necessary. The number of the beast is the number of a man, i.e. it represents a man (and not any abstraction, as, for example, the Roman empire). For a right understanding of this, it is necessary to bear in mind that, both among the Greeks and the Hebrews, the letters of the alphabet were used to denote numbers. Hence we must take such letters as will, when used as numbers, make up 666 (either in the Greek or the Hebrew alphabet) as the letters of the name in question. The solution of the riddle is “Neron Kesar,” the Hebrew form of the Latin “Nero Caesar” (=emperor Nero). The vowels *e* and *a* are not expressed in the ancient Hebrew writing. The number represented by NeRON KeSaR would be 666, thus:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \text{N} & \text{R} & \text{O} & \text{N} & \text{K} & \text{S} & \text{R} \\ 50 & + 200 & + 6 & + 50 & + 100 & + 60 & + 200 = 666. \end{array}$$



xiv. 1—5. *The Lamb, and they that are his.*

The Messiah appears upon Mount Zion with those that are his, viz. the 144,000 Israelites, the sealing of whom is recounted in vii. 3 sqq., while the innumerable multitude of the Gentiles is omitted here altogether. In opposition to the ungodly, who bear the mark of the beast, they are marked with the name of God, which has been imprinted upon them when they were sealed.

1. Read, "And I saw, and behold the Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him an hundred and forty-four thousand, having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads."

2. *And I heard the voice of harpers, &c.* : "And the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers playing [lit. harping] upon their harps."

3. Read, "And they sing a new song," &c.—*A new song* : comp. v. 9.—In connection with the thought that only those who had been sealed could learn the song, comp. i. 17.—[*The four beasts* : see note on iv. 6.]

4. Comp. 1 Cor. vii. 1.—*Being the first-fruits* : "to be the first-fruits."

5. Comp. Zeph. iii. 13.—[*No guile* : The best MSS. have "no lie."]—*Before the throne of God* should be omitted.

xiv. 6—13. *The announcement of the judgment.*

6. *In the midst of heaven* : see note on viii. 13.—*Kindred* : "tribe."

8. [Read, "And there followed another angel, a second," &c.] *Babylon* : see note on xvi. 19.—The song of triumph here is from Is. xxi. 9.—*The wine of the wrath* should be "the fiery wine."—*Fornication* : According to the usage of the Old Testament, this means idolatry ; see note on ii. 22. On account of its intoxicating and infatuating effect, it is also spoken of here as wine, or fiery wine. Comp. Is. li. 17.

9, 10. Read, "And another angel, a third, followed them," &c.—*Wine* should be "fiery wine."—*Holy* should be omitted.—As their punishment, the worshippers of the beast shall be made to drink a very different fiery wine from that of Babylon, viz. the wine of the wrath of God, which brings not pleasure but pain. Comp. Ps. lxxv. 8. This wine is unmixed, i.e. in its full strength and intoxicating power. The ancients usually drank their wine

mixed with water. The place of torment is the burning lake of sulphur.

11. Comp. Is. xxxiv. 9 sq.

12. Comp. xiii. 10.—*Here are* should be omitted.

13. Read, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, From henceforth blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. Yea, saith the spirit, they shall rest from their labours, but their works do follow them."—*From henceforth*: since it is only now that those who could disturb the blessedness of those who had fallen asleep in the Lord, have been brought to nought. The works *follow* the dead, i.e. they are a possession for eternity.

xiv. 14—20. *The harvest of the judgment.*

14. The appearance of the Messiah is described after Dan. vii. 13. He bears a sickle because he is coming to the harvest.—*The Son of man*: "a son of man."

15. *Is ripe*: "is become dry" [so lit.].—The meaning of the cry of the angel appears from ver. 20. We have already found in the Old Testament the destruction of an army on the field of battle spoken of under the figure of reaping the harvest, or treading out grapes (Is. xvii. 5, lxiii. 1 sqq.; Joel iii. 13).

20. Outside the city, the wine-press was trodden when the harvest was gathered in. The figure and the thing represented by it here coalesce. The mention of the blood and of the horses shows plainly that what is meant is a battle.—The Greek *stadion* measured  $202\frac{1}{2}$  yards [fairly rendered by the English *furlong* = 220 yards]. The distance here given would accordingly be about 184 English miles. This, or more exactly 1664 stadia [= 191 miles], was the length of Palestine, according to the ancient reckoning. Consequently the decisive battle is to take place in Palestine and in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem; for "the city," without further designation, especially when preceded by the mention of Mount Sion (ver. 1), can be no other than Jerusalem.

xv. 1—4. *The seven angels, and the song of praise sung by the victors.*

2. *And over his mark* should be omitted.—*The harps*: "harps."

3, 4. *The song of Moses* is the thanksgiving for deliverance from the hand of the Egyptians (Exod. xv. 1—21). It is not quite so clear what the seer means by the song of the Lamb. Perhaps it may have been some song of thanksgiving to Jesus, known



to the seer's readers, but unknown to us.—*Great and marvellous*, &c.: This adoration is compiled from Ps. cxi. 2, cxix. 75, cxlv. 17; Jer. x. 7; Ps. lxxxvi. 9.—*Saints* should be "the Gentiles" [i.e. "the nations." Two ancient MSS. read "the ages"].

xv. 5—xvi. 1. *The seven vials of wrath.*

5. *The tabernacle of the testimony*: "the tent of testimony;" i.e. the tabernacle, which was believed to be hidden in heaven [comp. ii. 17].

6. The dress of the angels is that of priests (comp. Exod. xxviii. 39 sqq.; Levit. vi. 10).

[7. *Beasts*: see note on iv. 6.]

8. Comp. Exod. xl. 34; Is. vi. 4.

xvi. 1. *Out of the temple* should be omitted. [The authority of the MSS. is in favour of retaining these words.]

xvi. 2—9. *The first four vials.*

2. The plagues described in this and the following verses (as far as ver. 21) are in imitation of the Egyptian plagues (Exod. vii.—x.).

5. [Read, "And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, thou who art and wast, the Holy One, because thou didst judge thus."]—*The angel of the waters* is the guardian angel of the waters. The later Jews supposed that there were guardian angels of water, fire (comp. xiv. 18), hail, light, &c.

6. The blood of the saints and prophets was shed in the great Roman persecution of the Christians. This verse alone would make it probable that the seven plagues concern the Gentiles only, and not the Jews; and ver. 9 raises this probability to a certainty.

7. Read, "And I heard the altar say," &c.

[8. *Unto him*: Most translators render, "unto it," i.e. the sun.]

9. *Men*: i.e. Gentile humanity, for the Jews have already repented (xi. 13) and given glory to God.

xvi. 10, 11. *The fifth vial.*

10. *The seat* [or "throne;" see note on ii. 13] *of the beast* (i.e. of Nero) is the city of Rome.—*Was*: "became."

xvi. 12—21. *The sixth vial.*

12. *The kings of the east*: "the kings from the east."—The

boundary river Euphrates (see note on ix. 14) points to the Parthians, whose princes we must understand by the phrase, "the kings from the east." We find a drying up of water for a similar purpose in Is. xi. 15 sq.

13. The false prophet appeared above under the figure of the second beast (xiii. 11 sqq.).

14, 15. On the spirits of the demons, and what is here said about them, comp. 1 Kings xxii. 21—23.—[*Of the earth and: omitted in the best MSS.*].—*The great day of God Almighty*: The day of the decisive battle, when all hostile powers shall be annihilated (comp. Mal. iv. 5). The mention of the last day reminds John of a saying of Jesus concerning its coming (Luke xii. 39), and gives him occasion to warn his readers.

16. Read, "And they gathered them together into the place called Harmagedon."—Harmagedon means Mountain of Magedon, Magedon being the Greek form of the Hebrew Megiddo. At Megiddo the Midianites were defeated by the Israelites under Barak and Deborah (Judges v. 19). At a later date, the Israelites under king Josiah, who received his death-wound there, were defeated by the Egyptians in the same place (2 Kings xxiii. 29 sq.; 2 Chron. xxxv. 20 sqq.). John's meaning, however, is not that the decisive battle will actually take place at Megiddo. On the contrary, he expects it before Jerusalem (see note on xiv. 20). What he here means is, that the slaughter of the enemy will be as terrible as that of the Israelites was on that memorable battle-field. Zechariah shows us what an impression that slaughter had made, when he compares the lamentations at the last judgment to the lamentations in the valley of Megiddo (Zech. xii. 11). In connection with this passage we may also compare the allegorical application of the names Bileam and Jezebel, which we have already had (ii. 14, 20).

17. *Of heaven* should be omitted.—*It is done*: i.e. all that had to be done immediately before the last judgment.

19. *The great city*: i.e. Rome, which immediately afterwards is called Babylon, inasmuch as it has rivalled the ancient Babylon in idolatry and hostility to the people of God.—The *wine of the fierceness of his wrath* should be "the fiery wine of his wrath." Comp. Is. li. 22.

21. The Gentiles persist to the last in their refusal to repent,



whereas the Jews were converted immediately after the earthquake that was sent as a visitation upon them (xi. 13)

xvii. *The woman upon the beast with seven heads.*

1. *Upon many waters*: comp. Jer. li. 13.

2. Comp. xiv. 8.

3, 4. *In the spirit*: comp. i. 10, iv. 2, xxi. 10.—*The wilderness* should be “a wilderness.”—*Scarlet* is the colour of blood.—*Purple*, the colour worn by princes and persons of high rank, indicates despotism.—*A golden cup*: comp. Jer. li. 7.—*Her fornication* should be “the fornication of the earth.” [The MS. authority is in favour of the reading of A.V., and Tischendorf, who adopted the reading here given, afterwards relinquished it again.]

5. Read, “And upon her forehead was a name written, a mystery, BABYLON,” &c.—Roman ladies of high rank frequently had their names worked in gold upon a frontlet, a custom which they adopted in imitation of courtezans.—*A mystery*: i.e. unintelligible to any except those to whom the meaning of the name of Babylon is disclosed by a revelation from on high.

6. The *saints* and the *martyrs* (i.e. “witnesses”) of *Jesus* are the Christians who were murdered in Rome in the year 64.—[*Wondered . . . admiration*: similar words in the Greek.]

[7. *Marvel*: same word as *wondered* in ver. 6.]

8. *The beast that thou sawest was and is not*, &c.: A description that exactly fits Nero, who was emperor, and then disappeared, leaving no trace behind, but will return from the kingdom of the dead in order that he may thereupon be delivered up to perdition by Christ. It must of course be admitted that in an earlier passage *the beast* denoted the Roman imperial power; and again, below (in ver. 10), Nero is represented by the fifth horn of the beast. Since, however, the godlessness and hatred of the Christians which was shown by the Roman empire culminates in Nero, and is incorporated, as it were, in him, he as an individual person might also be represented by the whole beast.—*And yet is* should be “and shall be present.”

9. Read, “And here is the intellect which has wisdom,” &c.: i.e. intelligence is necessary for the proper understanding of the explanation which follows.

10. Read, “And they are seven kings,” &c.—The seven heads

have, according to the seer, a double meaning. They signify, first, the seven hills on which stands the city of Rome (hence called by the later Romans "septicollis," or "the seven-hilled"); and, secondly, the seven kings (or, as we call them, "emperors") who rule over Rome until the time of the great judgment. John's expectation of *seven* is connected with the importance which he attached to the sacred number seven.—*Five are fallen*: viz. Augustus (B.C. 34—A.D. 14), Tiberius (A.D. 14—37), Caligula (A.D. 37—41), Claudius (A.D. 41—54), Nero (A.D. 54—68). *One is*: i.e. Galba (ob. Jan. 15th, 69). *The other* must come, in order to complete the sacred number, but can only remain *a short space*, since the final judgment is already near, and before that comes Nero is to ascend the throne again.

11. Nero is one of the seven (ver. 10), but he may also be regarded as the eighth, inasmuch as he once more succeeds to dominion after the seventh. [*Even he*: lit. "he himself also."]

12. The ten horns (after Dan. vii. 24) are ten kings, viz. the kings from the east (xvi. 12).—*One hour*: i.e. a short time. Comp. Gal. ii. 5.

13. The Parthian princes will ally themselves with Nero.

14. *Lord of lords*, &c.: comp. xix. 16. The Messiah is the true *King of kings*, in opposition to the Parthian princes who used to appropriate to themselves this proud title.—[*And they that are with him*, &c.: lit. "And they that are with him called chosen and faithful," i.e. They that are with him called, chosen and faithful, will overcome with the Lamb.]

15. Comp. Is. viii. 7 sqq.

16. Read, "And the ten horns which thou hast seen and the beast," &c.—Nero and the Parthian princes allied with him will destroy Rome. Metaphor and the actual matter here, as elsewhere, are mixed up together (comp. xiv. 20, xix. 17 sq.). The stripping naked and devouring refer to the woman; the making desolate and burning, to the city.

17. *And give their kingdom unto the beast*: as Nero expected, in pursuance of a prophecy. See Introd. p. 228.

18. At the time of the composition of the Apocalypse, the great city of Rome alone had dominion over the kings of the earth, so that this description and the mark given in ver. 9 made it perfectly recognizable by every reader of the Revelation.



xviii. *Song of rejoicing over the fall of the imperial city.*

2. The fall of the imperial city is so unalterably determined by God, that the angel can begin a song of triumph at the outset. It echoes Is. xiii. 19 sqq., comp. also Is. xxxiv. 11 sqq.—“A habitation of devils,” &c.: Desert and waste places were regarded by the Hebrews as the favourite dwelling-places of evil spirits (comp. Is. xiii. 21, xxxiv. 14; Tobit viii. 3; Baruch iv. 35). Birds that inhabited such regions were unclean according to the Mosaic law (see Levit. xi. 13 sqq.).

4. Comp. Jer. li. 6, 45; Is. xlviii. 20, lii. 11.—From this passage we may infer that at the time of the composition of the Revelation there was still (or perhaps we should rather say, there was again) a Christian community in Rome, notwithstanding the bloody persecution of the year 64.

5. Comp. Jer. li. 9.—*Have reached* should be “reached” [lit. “clave”].

6. Comp. Ps. cxxxvii. 8.

7. Comp. Is. xlvii. 7—9.

8. *Who judgeth her* should be “who hath judged her.”

9 sqq. For the lamentation which here follows, comp. Ezek. xxvi. 16—18, xxvii. 5—7, 28—36.

10. *That great city, &c.*: “The great city Babylon, the strong city!” &c.

12. *Thyine wood*: some kind of wood having a sweet scent, probably white cedar.

13. Read, “And cinnamon and amomum and incense and ointments . . . and horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men.”—“Amomum:” a costly pomade, prepared from an Asiatic plant.—“Bodies:” In the ancient world, slaves were not regarded as persons, but as chattels; the objection here expressed to a trade in souls could only arise on Christian ground.

14. *Dainty*: properly, “complete, faultless” [lit. fat].

17. *And every shipmaster, &c.*, should be, “And all pilots, and all travelling merchants, and all sailors, and all that trade by sea, stood afar off.”—*Stood afar off*, while in ver. 15 we have *shall stand afar off*: On this change of tense, see note on xi. 11.

18. *What city, &c.*, should be, “Who was like unto the great city?”

19. Comp. Ezek. xxvii. 30.

20. Read, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye saints and apostles and prophets, for God hath judged your judgment upon her."—Comp. Is. xlv. 23.—"Your judgment:" i.e. the sentence which she passed upon you, and which has been executed upon you. From this verse it is probable that several apostles had been put to death by the Gentile imperial power.

21. The symbolic act here described is in imitation of Is. li. 63 sq.

22 sq. Comp. Jer. xvi. 9, xxv. 10; Ezek. xxvi. 13; Is. xxiv. 8.

23. [*Candle* should be "lamp."]—*Thy merchants were the great men of the earth*: comp. Is. xxiii. 8.—*Deceived*="led astray."

24. *Of prophets and of saints*: as in xvi. 6, xvii. 6.

xix. 1—8. *The song of triumph of the community in heaven.*

1. [Read, "After these things I heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, Hallelujah; salvation and glory and power belong to our God."]—"Hallelujah:" i.e. praise ye Yahveh (Jehovah), a common form of praise, especially in the Psalms (Ps. cvi. 48, cxi. 1, cxii. 1, cxiii. 1, &c.). [In A.V. it is translated by the words, Praise ye the LORD.]

2. Comp. Deut. xxxii. 43.

3. [*Alleluia*: only the Greek form of Hallelujah, as in ver. 1, and so elsewhere where it occurs.]—*Rose up*: "riseth up" [so lit.].—With this verse comp. xiv. 11; Is. xxxiv. 10.

5. Comp. Ps. cxxxiv. 1, cxv. 13.—[*Came out of the throne*: Some ancient MSS. read, "came forth from the throne."]

6. Comp. Ezek. i. 24.—*Reigneth*: "hath taken possession of the kingdom."

7. Comp. Ps. cxviii. 24.—In the Gospels also the union between the Messiah and the community of the believers is set forth under the figure of a marriage (Matt. xxii. 2 sqq., xxv. 1 sqq.).

8. Read, "And it was given to her to array herself in fine linen bright and clean. For the righteous acts of the saints are the fine linen."—The righteous acts of the saints appear here as the adornment of the community. This is similar to the Catholic doctrine that good works form a treasure of the church.

9, 10. A parenthetical address of the angel to the seer. John stands upon an equality with the angel inasmuch as he also has the testimony of Jesus (see note on i. 9). This testimony con-



sists in the spirit of prophecy which he possesses as a prophet (x. 11, xxii. 9), and by virtue of which he feels himself commissioned to compose his Revelation.

xix. 11—16. *The appearance of the Messiah.*

11. Comp. vi. 2.—[*Was called*: better, “is called.”]

12. Comp. i. 14 sq., ii. 17.—[Read, “His eyes are as a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he hath a name written that no man knoweth but he himself.”—One ancient MS. reads, “names written;” and one reads, “and he hath names written, and a name written that no man knoweth but he himself.”]

13. Comp. Is. lxiii. 1 sqq.—[*Was clothed*: better, “is clothed.”]—*Dipped in*: “sprinkled with” [so one old MS.].—*The Word of God*: Christ is so called because God has spoken to the world through him.

[14. *Were*: better, “are.”]

15. Comp. xiv. 19; Ps. ii. 9; Is. lxiii. 3. [*He shall rule them*: see note on ii. 27. In the Greek there is special emphasis on the pronoun *he*.]—*And he treadeth, &c.*, should be, “And he treadeth the wine-press of the fiery wine of the wrath of Almighty God.” [*He* is emphatic here also.]

16. The name (comp. xvii. 14) is written upon the part of the vesture which covers the thigh.

xix. 17—xx. 3. *The victory over Satan and the powers which are in his service.*

17, 18. Comp. Ezek. xxxix. 17—20.—*In the midst of heaven*: see note on viii. 13.—[*The supper of the great God*: The best MSS. read, “the great supper of God.”]—*And the flesh of all men, &c.*, should be, “and the flesh of all men, both free and bond and small and great.”

19. On the place of gathering together, see xvi. 16.

20. Nero and the lying prophets, who were in his pay, receive their reward.—*Into a lake of fire* should be “into the lake of fire.” John speaks of it as *the* lake, though he has not mentioned it before, inasmuch as the idea of this lake was familiar to him and his readers (comp. xiv. 10; Is. xxx. 33, xxxiv. 9 sq.; Dan. vii. 11).

xx. 1. Comp. ix. 1.

2. Comp. xii. 9.

xx. 4—6. *The first resurrection and the kingdom of a thousand years [Millennium].*

4. Comp. Dan. vii. 9, 22, 27.—“And they seated themselves upon them:” i.e. Christ and his hosts (xix. 14).—A belief in the martyrs taking precedence of other Christians, such as John here professes, was very common in the primitive Christian age. Especially it was supposed that they did not, like the rest of the dead, descend first into the under-world, but that after death they passed directly to heaven. The reign of Christ and those who are his begins immediately after the decisive battle, i.e. on the great day of God (xvi. 14); but, according to Ps. xc. 4, one day of God is equivalent to a thousand years of man, and John therefore fixes the duration of this reign at a thousand years. Whether he intends this to be taken literally or not, must remain undecided.—*Lived* should be “came to life.”

5. *Lived not again*: “came not to life again.”—The idea of a two-fold resurrection originates in the later Judaism.

6. *The second death*: see ver. 14, and comp. also ii. 11, xxi. 8.—*Priests of God*, &c.: comp. i. 6, v. 10; Is. lxi. 6.

xx. 7—10. *The final contests.*

8. [*Quarters*: strictly, “corners.”]—Ezekiel had prophesied that, in the last days, Gog, the prince of the land Magog, would make war against the Israelites, and in so doing would meet with his own ruin (Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix.). In the later Jewish theology, the two names Gog and Magog were used for the Scythian tribes which dwelt in the far north, on the very edge, as it was supposed, of the earth. [Comp. “the four corners” with the going up *on the breadth of the earth* in the next verse.]

9. *The beloved city* is Jerusalem, where the saints, mentioned in ver. 4, reign. God shows how dear it is to Him by His direct intervention.

10. *And shall be*: “and they shall be.”

xx. 11—15. *The judgment of the world.*

11. Comp. Dan. vii. 9.—John only ventures by a circumlocution to mention the Highest, whose gaze heaven and earth cannot bear.

12. Comp. Dan. vii. 10.—In these books the works of men



are written, whereas in the Book of Life are the names of those who from the beginning have been destined to salvation.

13. *Hell* [Gr. Hades]: the under-world, as in i. 18, vi. 8.

14. *Death and hell* [Hades] are personified, as in vi. 8.—Dying is excluded from the new order of the world, so that no place of residence for the dead is any longer required. Paul also speaks of death as the last enemy that is to be overcome (1 Cor. xv. 26).

15. The relation of the books (ver. 12) to the Book of Life is not quite clear. In ver. 12, the dead are judged according to their works (which are written in the books). Here, however, all whose names are not found in the Book of Life, i.e. who have not been predestined by God to salvation, are doomed to perdition.

xxi. 1—xxii. 5. *The new order of the world. The eternal kingdom of God and of Christ in the new Jerusalem.*

1. A renovation of the world had been foretold by the ancient prophets (Is. lxxv. 17, lxxvi. 22; comp. 2 Pet. iii. 13).

2. *John* should be omitted.—The earthly Jerusalem was regarded as simply a copy of the higher, heavenly Jerusalem (comp. Gal. iv. 26; Heb. xii. 22). The latter, not having appeared upon earth before, is called the *new Jerusalem* (comp. iii. 12).

3. Comp. Ezek. xxxvii. 27; 2 Cor. vi. 16. The expression *tabernacle* was suggested by the tabernacle of the covenant (comp. xiii. 6).—*Out of heaven*: “out of the throne” [so two of the best MSS.].—*And be their God*: better, “as their God” [some ancient MSS. omit these words entirely].

4. Comp. Is. xxv. 8.

5. Comp. Is. xliii. 19; 2 Cor. v. 17.

6. Comp. Is. lv. 1.

7. *All things* should be “these things.”

8. *The fearful*: These appear as the opposite to those that “overcome” (ver. 7). They are such as did not dare to undertake the fight against the powers that are hostile to God.—*The abominable*: those who have defiled themselves with the abominations of idolatry.

10. Comp. Ezek. xl. 2.

11. *The glory of God*: the brilliant light which surrounded

God, and which in the new Jerusalem make sun and moon superfluous (ver. 23).—[*Her light*: i.e. that which gives light to the city, not light proceeding from it.]

12. The seer attaches somewhat the same importance to the number twelve (the number of the tribes of Israel) as he does to the number seven.—The angels are the guardian angels of the gates (comp. i. 20, xiv. 18, xvi. 5). [Lachmann, following one of the best MSS., omits the words *and at the gates twelve angels*.]

13. Comp. Ezek. xlvi. 31—34.

14. *Foundations*: i.e. foundation-stones.—*The names* should be “twelve names.”—On the distinction here assigned to the apostles, comp. Matt. xix. 28. It refers only to the immediate disciples of Jesus. Paul is not acknowledged in the Book of Revelation as an apostle.

15. Read, “And he that talked with me had a measure, a golden reed to measure the city, &c.”—Comp. Ezek. xl. 3.

16. Comp. Ezek. xlvi. 16.—*Twelve thousand furlongs*: 12,000 stadia (see note on xiv. 20) = 1379 English miles. There is, however, no means of determining whether this is the total circumference or the length of one side of the city. In the latter case the circumference would be 48,000 stadia = 5516 miles. The city, being of the same extent in all three directions, appears as a monstrous cube.

17. The number 12 underlies the measurement of the wall also ( $144 = 12 \times 12$ ). The wall is disproportionately low, as it is no longer required as a protection against hostile attacks.—On the measuring angel, comp. Zech. ii. 1, 2.—Read, “According to the measure of a man, which is that of the angel,” i.e. the inhabitants of heaven use the same scale of measures as men.

19, 20. Comp. Is. liv. 11 sq.—The precious stones are the same that the Jewish high-priest wore upon his breast-plate (Exod. xxviii. 17—20).

21. Comp. Is. liv. 12.

23. Comp. Is. lx. 19 sq.—*Had no need* should be “hath no need.”—*Light*: “lamp.”

24. Read, “And the Gentiles shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it.”—With this and the following verse, comp. Is. lx. 3—7.

27. Read, “And there shall in nowise enter into it anything



common [i.e. unclean], nor that doeth abomination and a lie." [The words here rendered "doeth abomination and a lie," may perhaps be better rendered "maketh an abomination and a lie," i.e. an idol.]—Comp. Is. lii. 1.

xxii. 1, 2. The new Jerusalem contains a stream and the tree of life, which were the distinguishing characteristics of Paradise (Gen. ii. 8 sqq. Comp. Exek. xlvii. 1, 7, 12).—*The tree of life*: "a tree of life."—*Twelve manner of fruits* should be "twelve crops of fruit" [lit. "twelve fruits."]"—"For the healing of the Gentiles:" Hence it appears that even in the new order of things the Gentiles are not yet completely healed.

3. Comp. Zech. xiv. 11.—[*And there shall be no more curse*: "there shall be no accursed thing any more." De Wette.—*But* should be "and."]

5. Comp. Dan. vii. 27.—Read, "And there shall be no night any more, and they have no need of the light of a lamp, nor of the light of the sun, for the Lord God shineth upon them, and they shall reign for ever and ever."

#### xxii. 6—21. EPILOGUE.

6. *And he said unto me*: i.e. the angel, speaking in the name of Jesus, said.—*And the Lord God, &c.*, should be, "and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel," &c.

8, 9. Comp. xix. 10.

10. The prophecy must be made as widely known as possible, since the time of its fulfilment is near. The reverse of this is found in Dan. xii. 4.

11. Read, "He that is unrighteous, let him continue to do unrighteousness; and he that is filthy, let him continue to do filthily; and he that is righteous, let him continue to do righteousness; and he that is holy, let him continue to be holy."—Every one may as well continue to live as he has hitherto done. The time is so short, that any change he may make in his conduct will be of no account. Comp. 1 Cor. vii. 29 sqq.; Dan. xii. 10.

12. [*And*: the best MSS. omit.]—*Shall be* should be "is."

14. Read, "Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have," &c.: see notes on iii. 4, and comp. also vii. 14.—*That they may have right to the tree of life*: i.e. that they may receive authority to enjoy its fruits.

15. Read, "Out with the dogs," &c.—Dogs were regarded by the Hebrews as unclean beasts (Is. lxvi. 3). Here the word is used as a general term for moral uncleanness (comp. Matt. vii. 6; Phil. iii. 2).

16. Comp. ii. 28; Is. xi. 1.—*To testify*, &c., should be "to testify these things to you, the churches." [This was Tischendorf's reading, but he afterwards relinquished it for the reading, "to testify these things to you concerning the churches."]

17. *The bride*: i.e. the believing community, which forms the population of the new Jerusalem (comp. xix. 7 sqq., xxi. 2, 9 sqq., and 2 Cor. xi. 2).—[*And let him that is athirst*, &c.: better, "And he that is athirst, let him come; he that will, let him take the water of life freely" (i.e. without payment. Comp. Is. lv. 1.)]

18, 19. Read, "I testify unto every man," &c.: viz. that it will happen to him as is said immediately after. The threat which follows is directed especially against copyists, who often dealt very arbitrarily with the books that they were occupied in copying, falsifying them by omissions or additions (comp. Deut. iv. 2).—*For* should be omitted.—[*Out of the book of life*: The best MSS. read, "from the tree of life."]*—And from the things* should be omitted [so that the words *which are written in this book* refer to the tree of life and the holy city].

20. Read, "He that testifieth these things saith, Yea, I come quickly. Amen, come, Lord Jesus."

21. Apostolic farewell, as in Paul's Epistles (Rom. xvi. 24; 1 Cor. xvi. 23; Gal. vi. 18).—*Amen* should be omitted. [The best MSS. vary between "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints," and "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all."]





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